1-1-2003

"Thinking globally" : political movements on the left in Massachusetts.

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"THINKING GLOBALLY": POLITICAL MOVEMENTS ON THE LEFT IN MASSACHUSETTS, 1974-1990

A Dissertation Presented

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Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

September 2003

Department of History

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation examines activist movements on the left in Massachusetts in the decade and a half after the end of United States involvement in the Vietnam War. The study focuses on three movements that were particularly strong in Massachusetts: the movement against nuclear energy in the latter half of the 1970s; the campaign for a nuclear weapons freeze between the United States and the Soviet Union in the early 1980s; and the Central American solidarity movement which campaigned against United States intervention in Central America during the 1980s. Massachusetts became a stronghold of all three of these movements and played an important role in transforming them into national movements.

The movements against nuclear energy, nuclear weapons and U.S. intervention in Central America demonstrate an altered continuity from the radical protest movements of the 1960s and challenge the notion that activism on the left faded away with the end of U.S. involvement in Vietnam, soldiering on only in fragmented "identity" politics. The movements against nuclear power, the arms race and U.S. intervention in Central

America grew out of the radical politics of the 1960s and sought to learn from the successes and excesses of that decade. In varying degrees, these movements sought to blend the radical perspectives of the New Left, the moral witness and non-violent direct action of the civil rights movement, and the new values and lifestyle of the counterculture. New movements growing out of the 1960s such as feminism and environmentalism further shaped the trajectory of these post-1960s movements, which sought to go beyond the self-destructive revolutionary militancy of the late 1960s student New Left to create broader based movements which pursued the universal vision of the 1960s left through community based activism. In so doing, these movements had a significant impact on mainstream liberals in Massachusetts, such as Senator Edward Kennedy, Speaker of the House Thomas "Tip" O'Neill and Governor Michael Dukakis. The confluence of strong activist movements and powerful liberal politicians in Massachusetts made it certain the state would have a significant impact on national politics in the 1970s and 1980s.

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INTRODUCTION

The End of an Era?

The explosion of radical activism in the 1960s profoundly altered the political and cultural landscape of the United States. The 1950s' movement for racial freedom and equality was the spark that set off a chain reaction that swept across America in the 1960s. The civil rights movement awoke a renewed idealism and commitment to democratic change that intersected with a swelling "baby boom" generation and rising prosperity to create a decade of almost unprecedented cultural and political transformation.[1] The civil rights struggle helped reawaken a radical pacifist movement against the cold war, the arms race and nuclear testing. A student "New Left" emerged, as Maurice Isserman has shown, from remnants of the "Old Left", which handed down a radical tradition from the 1930s.[2] In an age of affluence, the New Left sought to transcend the Old Left's orthodox Marxism and labor focus for a more existential search for authenticity and commitment. White college students returned from their participation in southern sit-ins, Freedom Rides and voter registration drives to lead a rebellion against *in loco parentis* rules on college campuses and organize the poor in northern slums. By the second half of the 1960s, Black Nationalism and other minority empowerment movements grew alongside a rising tide of opposition to the war in Vietnam. Increasingly, the political movements of the Sixties' generation fused into

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[1] Taylor Branch, Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1953-1963 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988); Clayborne Carson, In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1981).

[2] Maurice Isserman, If I Had a Hammer: The Death of the Old Left and the Birth of the New Left (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987).

what contemporaries simply called "The Movement", a sweeping challenge to what many saw as the materialism, racism, cultural repression, alienation and social disconnectedness of modern American life. The Movement also led a frontal assault on U.S. cold war ideology and policies, which it denounced as "militarism" and "imperialism". Running parallel to the overtly political "Movement" was a rapidly expanding counterculture, which promised personal and social transformation through experimentation with sex, drugs, music, meditation, communal living and a myriad of other radical changes in lifestyle. As the 1960s progressed, political and cultural movements increasingly merged in a utopian assault on the "old order".[3]

By 1968, America seemed to reach a revolutionary breaking point as the United States became polarized over the stalemated war in Vietnam, campus unrest spread rapidly and five summers of urban disorders exploded again with the riots following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. For many, the old order seemed teetering on the verge of collapse. Revolutionary movements abroad only confirmed this sense of momentum and inevitability. For decades, anti-colonial revolutions in the "Third World" seemed to presage some kind of world historic change. In 1968, "First" and "Second" World rebellions like the Paris worker-student strike, and the "Prague Spring" uprising in Communist Czechoslovakia, seemed to signal a new stage in the global revolution. These simultaneous uprisings convinced many living through that tumultuous year that

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[3] Terry Anderson, The Movement and the Sixties (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, Takin' It to the Streets: A Sixties Reader (New York: Oxford Press, 1995); Morris Dickstein, Gates of Eden: American Culture in the Sixties ((New York: Basic Books, 1977); David Farber, The Age of Great Dreams (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994); Todd Gitlin, Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage (New York: Bantam Books, 1987); James Miller, Democracy is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987); Douglass Rossinow, Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity and the New Left in America (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Kirkpatrick Sale, SDS (New York: Random House, 1973); Irwin Unger, The Movement: A History of the American New Left, 1959-1972 (New York: Dodd, Med, 1974).

the world was on the brink of momentous change that would surely sweep away the old order, with its racism, exploitation and social repression, and inaugurate a new epoch of freedom and equality.[4]

When the revolution failed to materialize, much of the "Movement" seemed to shatter. Some joined desperate underground guerrilla groups like the Weathermen, whose extremism seemed to grow in proportion to the diminishing prospects for revolution. Others embraced an increasingly nihilistic drug lifestyle that seemed to lose sight of the counterculture's earlier ideals of positive personal transformation. Some of those burnt out by the political failures of the Movement turned "from slogans to mantras" by embracing various forms of eastern mysticism, in some cases joining authoritarian religious cults. The killings at Kent State and Jackson State and the national student strike of 1970 seemed for many, to be the last gasp of the Movement that once seemed on the verge of inevitable triumph.[5]

What defined the death of the "Sixties" was in many ways the end of an existential mood marked by an exhilarating sense of promise. The mood stemmed from a rejection of the past, an immersion in the present and an optimistic faith the future would

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[4] Ronald Fraser, ed., 1968: A Student Generation in Revolt: An International Oral History (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988).

[5] Terry Anderson, The Sixties (New York: Longman, 1999); Stephen A. Kent, From Slogans to Mantras: Social Protest and Religious Conversion in the Late Vietnam Era (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2001). Kent's work underscores how widespread was the trajectory from protest politics to mystical religions and cults. He argues that as many activists found the revolutionary political routes to social transformation exhausted by the late 1960s, they looked to religious movements to usher in the utopian society earlier sought through political activism, and thus posits a certain continuity between the protest movements of the 1960s and the religious movements of the late 1960s and 1970s. Max Elbaum, Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Mao and Che (London; New York: Verso, 2002). Elbaum disputes what he describes as the "good early sixties/bad late sixties" dichotomy of most historians and argues the sectarian revolutionary movements of the late 1960s and 1970s were the logical outgrowth of the earlier New Left movements, and strove earnestly to link the revolutionary struggle in the United States to Third World Movements abroad and racial empowerment movements at home

usher in the "New Age". After the apocalyptic Zeitgeist reached its zenith in 1968, it seemed for many the generation of the 1960s would never recapture the magical sense of hope. Obituaries for the "Movement", and thus "the Sixties", poured in during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Journalist Michael Herr, who covered the war in Vietnam, wrote of the decade's cultural exhaustion, "Out on the street I couldn't tell the Vietnam veterans from the rock 'n' roll veterans. The Sixties had made so many casualties, its war and its music had run power off the same circuit for so long they didn't even have to fuse… The year [1968] had been so hot that I think it shorted out the whole decade…"[6] Perhaps the most memorable post-mortem for the decade was that of counterculture journalist Hunter S. Thomson, who in his 1971 novel, Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas, wrote of his time in San Francisco half a decade earlier:

> Strange memories on this nervous night in Las Vegas. Five years later? Six? It seems like a lifetime, or at least a Main Era – the kind of peak that never comes again. San Francisco in the middle sixties was a very special time and place to be a part of. Maybe *it meant something*. Maybe not, in the long run… but no explanation, no mix of words or music or memories can touch that sense of knowing that you were there and alive in that corner of time and the world. Whatever it meant… There was madness in any direction, at any hour… You could strike spark anywhere. There was a fantastic universal sense that whatever we were doing was *right*, that we were winning… And that I think was the handle – that sense of inevitable victory over the forces of Old and Evil. Not in any mean or military sense; we didn't need that. Our energy would simply *prevail*. There was no point in fighting – on our side or theirs. We had all the momentum; we were riding the crest of a high and beautiful wave… So now, less than five years later, you can go up on a steep hill in Las Vegas and look West, and with the right kind of eyes you can almost *see* the high-water mark – that place where the wave finally broke and rolled back.[7]

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[6] Michael Herr, Dispatches (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978).

[7] Hunter S. Thompson, Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas: A Savage Journey to the Heart of the American Dream (New York: Random House, 1971).

These early obituaries have helped reinforce the notion of a dramatic disjuncture between the 1960s and 1970s that obscures the continuities between the 1960s and subsequent decades. In this view, while environmentalism, feminism and gay liberation soldiered on as the last surviving heirs of the Movement, the rest of America sank into the drift and apathy of the "Me Decade" until the conservative ascendancy begun with Nixon's election in 1968, and temporarily interrupted by Watergate, resumed in 1980 with the election of Ronald Reagan.[8]

Post-Vietnam Movements: Altered Continuity

This image of a dramatic disjuncture obscures what might better be described as an altered continuity between the movements of the 1960s and subsequent decades. In many ways, the political and cultural rebellion of the 1960s only began to be felt in much of the country in the 1970s. The impact of the movements was like a concentrated ink drop on a napkin, whose circle expands ever wider as the ink dilutes. Opposition to the war in Vietnam and re-evaluation of cold war premises only moved into the mainstream of American society in the very late 1960s and 1970s. The clothing, hairstyles, music, sexual experimentation and drug use of the counterculture spread into

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[8] Two 1970s works have especially reinforced the gulf between the 1960s and 1970s. One is Tom Wolfe's famous, "The Me Decade and the Fourth Great Awakening", in Mauve Gloves and Madmen, Clutter and Vine, and Other Stories, Sketches and Essays (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1976). The other is Christopher Lasch's The Culture of Narcissim: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations (New York: Warner Books, 1979). Both are penetrating works that illuminate a good deal of American culture in the 1970s, but downplay continuities with the 1960s, and virtually ignore post-1960s activism. For this view, see also Edwin Schur, The Awareness Trap: Self Absorbtion Instead of Social Change (New York: Quadrangle, 1976). Peter Clecak refutes their views in America's Quest for the Ideal Self: Dissent and Fulfillment in the 60s and 70s (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983). Clecak emphasizes the themes that unify the 1960s and 1970s both culturally and politically. He argues the pursuit of personal fulfillment and social justice are two themes that unify both decades. His appraisal of the 1970s is far more generous than Wolfe's or Lasch's. Peter Carroll shares Clecak's more positive assessment of the 1970s in It Seemed Like Nothing Happened: America in the 1970s (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1982).

small towns across America as the 1970s progressed. Television programs such as "All in the Family", "The Jeffersons", and "Good Times" took up themes such as racism, feminism and the sexual revolution in a way that would have only rarely passed censors in the 1960s. The persistent antiwar themes of the 1970s' most popular television program "MASH", is testament to the degree to which the changed attitudes of the 1960s continued to permeate the popular culture of the 1970s.

The new movements of the 1970s and 1980s likewise derived inspiration and a sense of legitimacy from the movements of the 1960s, and sought to learn from the previous era and adapt those lessons to the changed environments of the 1970s and 1980s. Indeed, there is a direct movement progression growing out of the 1960s through the subsequent two decades. By the mid-1970s, the feminist and environmentalist movements converged in the movement against nuclear power, which sought to create a new movement that employed New Left ideas of "direct action" and "participatory democracy", but that elevated the role of women in a way the antiwar movement never did.[9] The "No Nukes" movement likewise pursued a community strategy that represented a continuation of the antiwar movement's trajectory, which by the late 1960s sought to take the movement off the campuses and root it in mainstream communities. The movement against nuclear power rejected the campus-based antiwar movement's violent rhetoric and vanguard politics for a return to the grass roots organizing and bottom-up approach of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in the South during the early 1960s. The movement against nuclear power also attempted to

[9] The prominence of women in the antinuclear struggles of the 1970s was a continuation of a trajectory begun in the movements of the 1960s. See Sara Evans, Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

incorporate the communal, agrarian lifestyle of the counterculture into its effort not only to stop nuclear power, but also create new forms of community and democracy in what historian Barbara Epstein has called "pre-figurative politics".[10]

Many antinuclear activists of the 1970s were veterans of the civil rights and anti-war struggles of the 1960s. Activists saw the new technology as part and parcel of the impersonal corporate technocracy that created the war in Vietnam and subordinated the people's welfare and citizen democracy to the imperatives of power, profit and an ever-expanding consumer society.[11] The movement against nuclear power that began to grow around 1974 reached critical mass in 1977, when 1,414 members of the antinuclear Clamshell Alliance were arrested during an occupation of the site of a proposed nuclear power plant in Seabrook, New Hampshire.[12] It was one of the largest mass-political arrests of the 1960s or 1970s, surpassing the 800 plus protestors arrested during the Berkeley Free Speech Movement in 1964 or the Columbia University uprising of 1968. Indeed, only the mass arrests of the Birmingham protests of 1963 or the mass detentions of over 10,000 antiwar radicals in Washington, D.C. during the May Day protests of 1971 surpassed the mass arrests at Seabrook.[13]

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[10] Barbara Epstein, Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Non-Violent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991). Wini Breines argues the importance of community organizing in the New Left in Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968; The Great Refusal (New York: Praeger; South Hadley, Massachusetts: J.F. Bergin, 1982).

[11] For the 1960s counterculture and technology, see Theodore Roszake, The Making of a Counterculture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and its Youthful Opposition (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1969).

[12] Epstein; also, for a direct witness account, Harvey Wasserman, Energy War: Reports from the Front (Westport, Connecticut: L. Hill, 1979).

[13] Diane McWhorter, Carry Me Home: Birmingham, Alabama: The Climactic Battle of the Civil Rights Revolution (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001). For an account of the mass detentions of 1971, see the last chapter in Lucy Barber, Marching on Washington: The Forging of an American Political Tradition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

The movement against nuclear power continued to sweep the nation, peaking in 1979 when the near meltdown at the Three Mile Island Nuclear Power Station in Pennsylvania effectively ended the era of nuclear expansion in the United States. Although the crusade against nuclear power began to wane, it had helped reawaken the movement against nuclear weapons, which grew as the next of the mass movements of the post-Vietnam era. Like the movement against nuclear power, the movement to "freeze" the arms race of the 1980s was deeply rooted in the activism of previous decades. The disarmament movement that had grown so dramatically in the late 1950s and early 1960s had largely gone into abeyance after the 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty, and was soon further eclipsed by the escalating war in Vietnam.[14] But by 1980, the movement was reborn, and with the breakdown of *détente* during the late Carter years and the arms build up under conservative Republican President Ronald Reagan creating fears of Armageddon, the nuclear weapons freeze movement swept the United States. Freeze activists pursued a moderate political strategy in pursuit of a radical agenda by downplaying the countercultural influences so prominent in the movement against nuclear power and pursuing a strategy of respectability that won mainstream public and political support within a few short years. By 1982 polls revealed an overwhelming majority of Americans supported a nuclear weapons freeze by the United States and Soviet Union. In June of 1982, over 750,000 Americans attended a nuclear weapons freeze rally in New York's Central Park. The numbers surpassed all but one of the mass

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[14] Paul Boyer discusses the cycles of the movement against nuclear weapons in "Epilogue: From the H-Bomb to Star Wars: The Continuing Cycles of Activism and Apathy", in By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).

gatherings of the 1960s.[15] In a campaign reminiscent of Senator Eugene McCarthy's "Clean for Gene" presidential campaign of 1968, freeze activists, many from old-line radical pacifist organizations, sought to make ending the nuclear arms race as mainstream as apple pie. The movement succeeded in winning passage of a freeze resolution by the House of Representatives in 1983, and challenged the dominance of the Reagan administration' martial, cold war rhetoric.[16] Although the freeze movement never accomplished its stated goals, by shifting the terms of debate, Frances Fitzgerald suggests the movement forced the Reagan administration to downplay the strategy and rhetoric of limited nuclear war coming from the "war winners" in the administration, and ultimately helped lay the ground work for the serious negotiations that took place in the age of Mikhail Gorbachev.[17]

Just as the freeze movement followed quickly in the wake of the antinuclear energy movement, the Central American solidarity movement, which grew in the shadow of the freeze movement in the early 1980s, exploded as the freeze movement declined in late 1983. The year 1979 saw revolutionary movements sweep across Central America, as the leftist Sandinistas of Nicaragua overthrew the U.S.-supported Nicaraguan dictator, Anastasio Somoza, and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) threatened to topple El Salvador's U.S.-supported military junta and right-wing oligarchy. Ronald Reagan campaigned for president on a promise to push

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[15] Approximately 900,000 attended the march in Washington, D.C. against the war in Vietnam that occurred on November 15, 1969.

[16] David S. Meyer, A Winter of Discontent: The Nuclear Freeze and American Politics (New York: Praeger, 1990).

[17] Frances Fitzgerald, Way Out There in the Blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the End of the Cold War (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000).

back what conservatives saw as a rising tide of communist-backed revolution in Central America. Once in office, Reagan sought to covertly destabilize and overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua and vastly increased U.S. military aid, including military advisors, to El Salvador, amidst a dramatic rise in right-wing death squad killings.[18]

For those on the U.S. left, events in Central America portended a replay of Vietnam and an effort to resurrect early cold war ideology. A vigorous and eclectic opposition to U.S. policies emerged and grew throughout the 1980s. Young militants gravitated toward groups like the Committee in Solidarity with the People in El Salvador (CISPES), which hearkened back to the Third World Revolution supporters of the late 1960s. Like their predecessors who traveled to Cuba as part of the *Venceramos* brigades in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Central American solidarity radicals of the 1980s traveled to Nicaragua and El Salvador to show "solidarity" with Central American revolutionaries' efforts to build new, egalitarian societies.[19] Many church organizations became heavily involved in efforts to stop U.S. intervention and to support popular movements in Central America. In the wake of the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s, with its calls for peace and social justice, a growing number of Catholics spoke out in opposition to the war in Vietnam and remained politically active in subsequent decades. The emergence of "liberation theology", an amalgam of Marxist and Christian doctrine, as a driving force in the revolutionary movements in Central America, assured

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[18] William M. LeoGrande, Our Own Backyard: The United States in Central America, 1977-1992 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Robert Kagan, A Twilight Struggle: American Power and Nicaragua, 1977-1990 (New York: Free Press, 1996); Thomas Walker, ed., Reagan *versus* the Sandinistas: The Undeclared War on Nicaragua (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987).

[19] For the roots of Latin American solidarity movements in the 1950s and 1960s, see Van Gosse, Where the Boys Are: Cuba, Cold War and the Making of the American Left (London; New York: Verso, 1993).

the political participation of North American Catholic activists in the Central American solidarity movement, alongside other historically active peace churches such as the Quakers, Mennonites, Unitarians and others. The highly visible role of faith-based activists continued a trend begun by the civil rights movement in the 1950s and expanded with the growth of clerical activism against the war in Vietnam and the 1980s nuclear weapons freeze movement.[20]

Central American solidarity activists pursued a number of activities to prevent a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua or El Salvador, and to curtail U.S. support for right-wing forces in the region. The movement carried out a heavy lobbying campaign in Congress to cut U.S. military aid to conservative forces in the region as well as "material aid" campaigns to help those affected by war and poverty. The faith-based wing of the movement undertook a "sanctuary" campaign by providing church asylum to Central American refugees fleeing persecution in El Salvador and Guatemala. Many activists joined "internationalists" from Europe and Canada in Nicaragua to help with the coffee harvest. The movement pursued a national campaign to have universities become "sister universities" to universities in Central America and to have U.S. cities declare themselves "sister cities" with cities in Central America. Others joined a national "Pledge of Resistance", pledging to take part in massive civil disobedience should U.S. military forces invade a Central American country. Thus, like the movements against nuclear power and nuclear weapons, the Central American solidarity movement represented a direct outgrowth of the political movements of the 1960s. By keeping alive

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[20] Daniel L. Migliore, Called to Freedom: Liberation Theology and the Future of Christian Doctrine (Philadelphia: Westminister Press, 1980); Margaret Randall, Christians in the Nicaraguan Revolution (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1983); Phillip Berryman, Liberation Theology: Essential Facts About the Revolutionary Movement in Latin America – And Beyond (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987).

the specter of Vietnam, the movement sought to contain and roll back the resurgent cold war doctrines of the Reagan administration.[21]

The post-Vietnam movements against nuclear power, the nuclear arms race and U.S. intervention in Central America comprise the focus of this study. Chronologically, they succeeded each other in an undulating wave that saw one emerge as the preceding one declined. These movements were by no means the only heirs to 1960s radicalism and activism. They were joined by other post-Vietnam movements such as the campaign for divestment from the apartheid government in South Africa, a powerful gay movement to promote AIDS awareness and combat government apathy to the epidemic, a nationwide campaign to fight homelessness, and the efforts by Rev. Jesse Jackson to bring minorities and progressive whites together in a national "Rainbow Coalition". The 1970s and 1980s constituted an age of ongoing activism, rooted in the 1960s, but transformed by the changing economic and political landscape of subsequent decades. What made these activist movements so relevant in the post-Vietnam era was their important impact on mainstream liberalism, which, like radical and left-leaning activism, underwent significant transformations rooted in the politics of the 1960s.

Liberalism: The 1960s and Beyond

The mid-1960s witnessed the apex of post-World War II liberalism. Rooted still in the New Deal coalition of urban ethnics, labor, northern African Americans, liberal academics and to a lesser degree the white South, the Democratic Party during the era of

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[21] Van Gosse, "'The North American Front': Central American Solidarity Activism in the Reagan Era" in Mike Davis and Michael Sprinker, Reshaping the U.S. Left: Popular Struggles in the 1980s (London, New York: Verso, 1988).

John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson implemented much of the left over Fair Deal agenda of Harry S. Truman and then moved beyond it to significantly expand the New Deal social welfare state and advance the cause of civil rights. The pinnacle of 1960s liberalism came with the avalanche of "Great Society" legislation signed by Lyndon Johnson in the years between 1964 and 1966, which ran roughly parallel to the peak years of post-World War II economic prosperity. With many middle and working class Americans enjoying unprecedented affluence, Johnson was able to expand his predecessor's proposed legislation on poverty and civil rights to an ambitious "War on Poverty" and the historic Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965. In the election of 1964, the American public seemed to enthusiastically endorse the liberal direction of the Kennedy- Johnson years by handing Johnson an historic landslide over his conservative Republican challenger, Barry Goldwater.[22]

The War on Poverty and civil rights bills of the Great Society were in many ways driven by activist politics on the left, particularly from the civil rights movement in the South. The civil rights and New Left movements helped re-energize the Democratic Party's social democratic elements, especially among organized labor, which bridged the grass roots activism of the left with the institutional powers in the Democratic Party to produce the flurry of social transformation and liberal legislation of the mid-1960s.[23] As Lyndon Johnson ran against Goldwater in 1964, Students for a Democratic Society

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[22] Allen J. Matusow, The Unraveling of America; A History of Liberalism in the 1960s (New York: Harper and Row, 1984).

[23] Kevin Boyle, ed., Organized Labor and American Politics, 1894-1994; The Labor Liberal Alliance (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998); Peter Levy, The New Left and Labor in the 1960s (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

(SDS), the nation's foremost student New Left organization took up the slogan "part of the way with LBJ".[24]

The productive but often fragile ties between the activist left and mainstream liberalism in the first half of the 1960s was torn asunder by divisions over the speed of implementing the civil rights agenda and most of all by differing attitudes toward the cold war, brought painfully to the fore with the war in Vietnam. Members of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) often felt the Kennedy administration moved too hesitantly to support the movement during the early 1960s.[25] Relations initially improved under Johnson but were again strained during the 1964 Democratic Convention in Atlantic City, when the Democratic leadership refused to replace the segregationist Mississippi delegation with the integrated delegation from the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.[26]

The breach opened up between the activist left and mainstream liberalism in Atlantic City widened dramatically as Johnson rapidly expanded U.S. military involvement in the Vietnam War after the 1964 election. Radical politics spread across American campuses as protests swelled year after year. By 1967, the radical wing of the antiwar movement announced a shift from "protest to resistance" resulting in confrontational actions at the University of Wisconsin, the Pentagon and the Oakland draft induction center. As tear gas and pitched battles between students and police and National Guard became commonplace on major U.S. campuses, the New Left, heavily

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[24] Sale; Miller.

[25] Carson.

[26] Robert Weisbrot, Freedom Bound: A History of America's Civil Rights Movement (New York: Plume, 1991); Anderson, The Sixties; Farber, The Age of Great Dreams.

influenced by the militant turn in the civil rights movement toward black power, increasingly shifted its focus to calls for revolution. New Left radicals now denounced "corporate liberalism" and "cold war liberalism" as the prime engine behind "U.S. imperialism", class inequality and the war in Vietnam. By 1968, many on the left had come to consider mainstream liberalism to be among the outworn institutions of the old order that needed to be swept away by the rising revolutionary tide around the world.[27]

As was the case with civil rights in the early 1960s, antiwar activism had a profound impact on late 1960s liberalism. From only two members of Congress opposing the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin resolution, by 1968, the Democratic Party was deeply divided over the war in Vietnam. The divisions came to a head at the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago. While Mayor John Daley's police tear-gassed antiwar radicals in the streets of Chicago, inside the convention hall, fistfights broke out between "hawks" and "doves" in the party.[28]

The divided Democratic Party limped out of Chicago to face a united Republican Party and increasingly disaffected American electorate. The white South had already abandoned the Democrats over civil rights, and now some feared the party's ethnic and urban base would begin to hemorrhage. Many middle and working class Americans were incensed at the campus unrest, urban riots and cultural rebellion that seemed to be inundating America. Strenuous efforts by organized labor kept most union workers in the Democratic fold, but many middle class voters who had helped hand Johnson a landslide in 1964 abandoned the Democrats for the "Law and Order" appeals of Richard

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[27] Sale; Miller; Gitlin.

[28] David Farber, Chicago '68 (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Theodore White, The Making of the President, 1968 (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1969).

Nixon. Southern whites and some northern urban ethnic groups contributed to the 13.5% of the popular vote received by independent former Alabama governor George Wallace.

Nixon's presidency hardly ended liberal politics in America, however. As Johnson's war became Nixon's war, many Democrats found themselves free to join the ranks of those opposed to the war. Opposition to the war in Congress grew throughout the Nixon years. Meanwhile, Congress turned back Nixon's efforts to put conservative former segregationists on the Supreme Court and Nixon signed several important pieces of liberal legislation such as the Environmental Protection Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.[29]

The major issue of the early Nixon years remained the war in Vietnam. Antiwar activism exploded in late 1969 and made wide inroads into mainstream America as witnessed by the October Moratorium and November Mobilization against the war.[30] By 1972, however, Nixon's Vietnamization policy had reduced draft calls and U.S. casualties in Vietnam significantly, and his visits to the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union, ushered in the era of *détente*. Meanwhile, radical activists slowly drifted toward mainstream politics while elements of the Democratic Party embraced much of the New Left's perspective. The 1968 convention had created a system of proportional representation for the next convention that set aside a percentage of seats for minorities, youth and women. The Miami convention witnessed a stark changing of

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[29] James Reichley, Conservatives In An Age of Change: The Nixon and Ford Administrations (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1981); Stephen E. Ambrose, Nixon (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987).

[30] In many ways 1969 was the watershed year when the antiwar movement made great inroads into mainstream America. Charles DeBenedetti, An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990). DeBenedetti emphasizes the importance of the mainstream antiwar movement, which he argued has often been overshadowed by the militant wing of the movement.

the guard. Alongside "hawks" like Washington Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson and AFL-CIO president George Meeney assembled feminists, environmentalists, peace activists, civil rights crusaders, gay rights advocates and countercultural libertarians. Although some unions like the United Auto Workers and the American Federation of State, Municipal and County Employees embraced the changes, AFL-CIO president Meeney, surveying the extremely liberal New York delegation, fumed, "What kind of delegation is this? They've got six open fags and only three AFL-CIO people on that delegation... Representative? This party seems to have an instinct for suicide."[31]

Richard Nixon's landslide victory over George McGovern in 1972 seemed to represent a repudiation of any return to the radical and divisive days of the 1960s, and a consolidation of the conservative backlash begun in 1968. Yet, once again, the backlash also seemed tentative. Nixon's coattails remained short and Republicans made little headway in Congress. And in 1974, liberal Democrats exploited the aftermath of the Watergate scandal and racked up impressive gains in Congress. During the 1970s, Democrats in Congress challenged what they saw as the excesses of the national security state revealed during the Vietnam War by passing the War Powers Act and conducting the Senate hearings by Frank Church that led to significant restrictions on U.S. intelligence agencies' ability to conduct a shadow foreign policy, and outlawed assassinations by any U.S. agencies. As America entered the post-Vietnam War era, a significant number of the Democrats were determined to move the United States beyond the cold war ideology they believed had led to Vietnam. They further brought the influences of environmentalism, feminism and minority empowerment into the

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[31] Theodore White, The Making of the President: 1972 (New York; Bantam, 1973); Hunter S. Thompson, Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail, '72 (New York: Fawcett Popular Library, 1973).

mainstream of American political discourse.[32] During the 1970s and 1980s, as activists on the left undertook crusades against nuclear power, the arms race and U.S. intervention in Central America, their movements resonated inside the liberal wing of the Democratic Party.

The influence of the activist left inside mainstream liberalism during the post-Vietnam era coincided with an uneven but growing ascendancy of the New Right in American politics. The roots of the conservative ascendancy can be traced back to Barry Goldwater's 1964 campaign when the right wing of the Republican Party won control from the moderate wing of the party, calling for the roll back of the New Deal social welfare state and more aggressive conduct of the cold war. In 1966, Ronald Reagan became among the first to capitalize on 1960s backlash politics by winning the California governorship in a campaign that blasted Berkeley radicals, the Watts riot and emerging San Francisco counterculture. Supreme Court decisions on school prayer, classroom Bible reading and abortion helped mobilize a politicized evangelical Christian movement.[33] In the 1970s, "neo liberals" centered around the hard-line conservative Committee on the Present Danger challenged the direction of *détente* and called for a renewal of all out cold war.[34] The cold warriors, free marketers, and religious conservatives of the New Right made inroads throughout the 1960s and 1970s by exploiting the backlash politics of social alienation. By 1980, a decade of economic decline, de-industrialization, the waning of American power evidenced by the Iranian

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[32] Carroll.

[33] Jerome L. Himmelstein, To the Right: The Transformation of American Conservatism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

[34] Jerry W. Sanders, Peddlers of Crisis: The Committee on the Present Danger and the Politics of Containment (Boston: South End Press, 1983).

hostage crisis, and the drift of the Carter administration created the opening for the New Right to bring about a major realignment in American politics.[35]

The rise of the right in last quarter of the twentieth century has been the focus of much important historical work. Thomas Edsall's Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights and Taxes on American Politics and Jonathon Rieder's Canarsie: Jews and Italians of Brooklyn Against Liberalism reveal the importance of cultural and racial factors in turning a large segment of the New Deal coalition on the road to becoming "Reagan Democrats".[36] The emphasis on the rise of the right, however, has tended to downplay the importance of post-Vietnam activism and liberalism as at best an irrelevant postscript to the 1960s, and at worst as fueling the right wing ascendancy by further alienating the Democratic Party from mainstream American society. Yet, as this work hopes to show, the activist left and Democratic liberals of the 1970s and 1980s played an important role in defining the terms of debate and the course of history in the post-Vietnam era by holding forth an alternative vision and vigorously contesting the rightward trajectory of the country. Antinuclear activists might not have ended the nation's reliance on nuclear power, but by the end of the 1970s, the movement had raised so many questions in the public mind and added to the costs of nuclear expansion, that the near meltdown at Three Mile Island spelled the end of the age of nuclear expansion. The nuclear freeze movement likewise vigorously contested the re-emergence of "Cold War II" in the early Reagan years. Although the movement failed

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[35] Carroll.

[36] Thomas Edsall, Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights and Taxes on American Politics (New York: Norton, 1991); Jonathon Rieder, Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn Against Liberalism (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985); See also, Gary Gerstle and Steve Fraser, eds., The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

to halt the arms build up, it revealed deep anxiety among the American public towards the arms race and helped blunt the trajectory of the Reagan administration's cold war policies and arguably paved the way for a new *détente*. Whereas 1980 was not a good year for politicians to be for arms control, 1982 was not a good year to be against it. Lastly, the determined movement against U.S. intervention in Central America kept alive the "Vietnam syndrome" and constrained the Reagan administration's ability to intervene more directly in Central America. Indeed, the administration's efforts to circumvent congressional limitations on its covert war against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua led to the series of illegal arms sales to Iran to fund the Nicaraguan contras soon known as the "Iran-Contra scandal".[37] To be sure, this represented a mixed record. Yet activism and liberal politics in the post-Vietnam era was far more dynamic than has often been depicted, and represented far more than speed bumps on the conservative's road to political ascendancy. During the 1970s and 1980s, no state in the union represented the alternative road to that conservative ascendancy more than Massachusetts.

"Don't Blame Me, I'm From Massachusetts"

As President Richard M. Nixon's presidency unraveled from the Watergate scandal in 1973 and 1974, a bumper sticker began to appear on Massachusetts automobiles that read, "Don't Blame Me, I'm From Massachusetts". Implicit in the reminder that Massachusetts was the only state to vote for George McGovern in 1972,

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[37] Lawrence E. Walsh, Firewall: The Iran-Contra Conspiracy and Cover Up (New York: Norton, 1997); Peter Kornbluh and Malcolm Byrne, eds., The Iran-Contra Scandal: The Declassified History (New York: New Press, 1993); Theodore Draper, A Very Thin Line: The Iran Contra Affairs (New York: Hill and Wang, 1991).

was the reproach that the rest of the country had taken the wrong fork in the road that year. The sense of America taking wrong turns seems deeply ingrained in Massachusetts' politics in the decades after President John F. Kennedy's assassination. The idea that President Kennedy's death interrupted a trajectory that held the promise of leading the United States to a brighter future, rather than the disastrous detour into Vietnam taken by Lyndon B. Johnson, remains a powerful idea in the national psyche, and especially so in Massachusetts. The myth of aborted promise, of the road not taken, continued to give post-1960s Massachusetts liberalism a sense of legitimacy as the executor of John Kennedy's legacy and the unfulfilled hopes and ideals of the 1960s. Massachusetts liberals would frequently invoke President Kennedy's name in support of policies far to the left of anything embraced by the president while he was alive. None would lay claim to being the heir of the martyred president's legacy more than his younger brother, Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy, who became for the rest of the nation the embodiment of "Massachusetts liberalism". Many other Massachusetts liberals invoked President Kennedy's legacy from Thomas P. ("Tip") O'Neill, who rose to be Speaker of the House in 1976, to three term governor Michael Dukakis, who frequently sought to conjure up associations with JFK during his ill-fated presidential campaign, to Vietnam veteran, Lieutenant Governor then Senator John Forbes Kerry, who sought to strike a Kennedyesque pose throughout his career. As the political center drifted to the right in the wake of the 1960s, Massachusetts liberals, by associating themselves with nostalgia for "Camelot", continued to put themselves forward as the trustees of the uncompleted road set out upon by John Kennedy.

The post-1960s liberalism of Massachusetts politicians may have legitimated itself by reference to John Kennedy, but in many ways it was the radical activism of the 1960s that most shaped Massachusetts liberalism in the post-Vietnam era. The civil rights and antiwar movements were especially strong in Massachusetts. Massachusetts colleges and churches comprised a powerful incubator for the civil rights movement, producing a disproportionate share of northern civil rights activists who headed south as the "new abolitionists" in SNCC and CORE. Although the campus based New Left and antiwar movements had their origins in the Midwest (the "Third Coast") and in the San Francisco Bay area, by the late 1960s Massachusetts had become a stronghold of "the Movement". The 1967 draft card burning in Boston was one of the largest in the nation, and the demonstration of over 250,000 in the Boston Commons during the October 15, 1969 moratorium against the war in Vietnam was likewise among the largest to take place across America. By 1970, the inroads of the New Left into mainstream liberalism made itself dramatically felt in Massachusetts when the state legislature became the first in the nation to pass a resolution calling for the immediate withdrawal of United States military forces from the war in Vietnam.

Although Massachusetts radicalism grew out of the same baby boom, prosperity and cold war dynamics that produced the youth rebellion nationwide, coming out of the 1960s, radical activists in Massachusetts traced their lineage not to John Kennedy but the Commonwealth's revolutionary heritage, from the Boston Massacre of 1770, the Tea Party of 1774, Shay's Rebellion in 1786, the abolitionist movement and utopian politics of the nineteenth century, the campaign to save Sacco and Vanzetti in the 1920s, all the way down to the modern civil rights and peace movements. The degree to which

Massachusetts radicals sought to lay claim to America's revolutionary heritage emerges from a close examination of Bay State activism in the 1960s and beyond. When in 1974, antinuclear energy activist Sam Lovejoy toppled a weather tower in Montague, Massachusetts to protest a nuclear power station to be constructed there, he chose February 22, George Washington's birthday, as the day to do so. When Randy Kehler, Judith Scheckel and other Massachusetts activists launched the nuclear weapons freeze movement in 1980, they repeatedly invoked the legacy of nineteenth century abolitionists and proclaimed that just as their predecessors had abolished slavery, they too would abolish nuclear weapons. And in the 1980s, Massachusetts Central American solidarity activists repeatedly compared Central American revolutionaries to the (North) American revolutionaries of 1776. Although laying claim to symbols of America's revolutionary past was not the exclusive domain of Massachusetts radicals, such rhetoric was woven into their rhetoric far more than one would find among activists elsewhere, and seemed to give Bay State radicals a unique sense of historical continuity and legitimacy.[38]

Massachusetts was not the only state with a special sense of identity, but it was one that played a disproportionately influential role in the national politics of the 1970s and 1980s. Massachusetts was the birthplace of two of the major post-Vietnam activist movements to sweep the United States. The direct action campaign against nuclear

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[38] Gary Gerstle has described various types of Americanism, from a nationalistic variant to what he calls progressive Americanism that draws inspiration from America's revolutionary heritage and progressive movements and symbols throughout U.S. history. Gerstle argues that in the 1930s, the Popular Front made great headway by embracing progressive Americanism, symbolized in the slogan, "Communism is Twentieth Century Americanism". The activists in this study very much draw on a progressive view of Americanism, which sought legitimacy in presenting itself as part of a continuous struggle for peace, justice and equality in American history. See Gerstle, Working Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960 (Cambridge, England; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

power began in western Massachusetts in 1974 when an antiwar activist, Sam Lovejoy committed a dramatic act of sabotage against a proposed nuclear plant's weather tower and sparked a mass movement against nuclear energy, which in a few short years spread throughout New England, culminating in the mass protests in Seabrook, New Hampshire in 1977 and 1978. By the late 1970s, Massachusetts exported activists like Lovejoy, Anna Gyorgy and activist-journalist Harvey Wasserman to the rest of the country, helping to mobilize a national movement. In 1980, western, Massachusetts peace activists took the idea of a nuclear weapons freeze and put it on the ballot as a non-binding referendum in three western Massachusetts counties. Similarly, Massachusetts freeze activists became apostles of the new movement throughout the United States. Within two years, the freeze movement swept the United States to become the largest peace movement of the post-Vietnam era. Although opposition to U.S. intervention in Central America originated on the West Coast, when the "solidarity" movement came to Massachusetts, the Bay State became a stronghold of the movement. Massachusetts activists were disproportionately represented on the first Witness for Peace mission to the Nicaraguan-Honduran border in 1983. In 1985, when mass civil disobedience swept the country in protest of the Reagan administration's embargo of Nicaragua, the single largest number of arrests, over 500, took place in Boston.[39]

The pioneering role of grassroots radicalism in Massachusetts percolated up to shape the Commonwealth's mainstream politics, which was mirrored in the profound influence the state's politicians had on national politics in the 1970s and 1980s. Foremost among the Democratic heavyweights from Massachusetts was Senator Edward

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[39] Boston Globe, June 13 and 14, 1985.

Kennedy. Unlike his brothers John and Robert, who saw the Senate as a stepping-stone to the White House, "Ted" ranks among such masters of the Senate as Lyndon Johnson and Daniel Webster. Kennedy's ability to use his power in the Senate to advance a liberal agenda has been profound. In Massachusetts, Kennedy was able to straddle the blue-collar, union, ethnic, "Old" Democratic Party of the New Deal with the activist, college educated, middle class "New" Democratic Party.[40] Kennedy became an early critic of nuclear power, and in the 1980s championed a nuclear weapons freeze, drafting a Senate freeze resolution and co-authorizing a book with maverick Republican senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon entitled, Freeze: Or How You Can Help Prevent Nuclear War.[41] As one Massachusetts antinuclear activist stated of Kennedy, "He has defined what is legitimate. His presence did not allow anyone to move the political center to the right... I think the stability and direction he has provided has given an umbrella under which a lot of things could be done [on the left]."[42]

The influence of Massachusetts liberalism was magnified by another titan of Massachusetts politics, Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill, whose Cambridge district embraced both the activist elements of academia and the old ethnic neighborhoods of Cambridge. Like Kennedy, O'Neill, who moved rapidly from whip to Majority leader to Speaker of the House in the 1970s, was a master parliamentarian who bridged the gap between New Deal Democrats and the younger generation of "New Democrats" growing

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[40] Burton Hersh, The Shadow President: Ted Kennedy in Opposition (South Royalton, Vermont: Steerforth Press, 1997). For Kennedy's early years, see Burton Hersh, The Education of Edward Kennedy: A Family Biography (New York: Morrow, 1972).

[41] Edward M. Kennedy and Mark O. Hatfield, Freeze! How You Can Help Prevent Nuclear War (Toronto; New York: Bantam Books, 1982).

[42] Interview with Vincent O'Connor, April 3, 2003.

out of the activist politics of the 1960s. O'Neill helped set the agenda in the House and in the 1980s the burly Irishman became for many Americans the personification of liberal opposition to Ronald Reagan. O'Neill's position in the House assured the influence of Massachusetts liberals in the national debate on the nuclear weapons freeze and U.S. policy in Central America.[43]

Young Bay State firebrands complimented the influence of Massachusetts powerhouses like Kennedy and O'Neill. In the early 1980s, Congressman Gerry Studds, from the district encompassing Cape Cod, became synonymous with outspoken opposition to the Reagan administration's policies in Central America. His 1980 "Studds Report" was an influential document in delineating a left-liberal position in Congress on Central America. By mid-decade, newly elected Senator, John F. Kerry, a Vietnam Veteran and former antiwar activist, took up the mantle of outspoken opposition to Reagan's Central American policies, traveling to Nicaragua on a peace mission in 1985 and conducting a series of hearings into drug smuggling by the U.S. supported contras later in the decade.[44] Another of the Young Turks from Massachusetts was Congressman Edward Markey, representing a mixed blue collar and professional district north of Boston. In the late 1970s, Markey developed a reputation as an ardent opponent of nuclear power and was the only member of Congress invited to speak at a mass 1979 rally against nuclear power in New York City. In the 1980s, Markey spearheaded the campaign in Congress to pass a nuclear weapons freeze resolution, becoming to the nuclear freeze issue what Gerry Studds was to Central America.

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[43] John A. Farrell, Tip O'Neill and the Democratic Century (Boston: Little, Brown and Co.).

[44] John Kerry's years with Vietnam Veterans Against the War are recounted in Gerald Nicosia, Home to War: A History of the Vietnam Veterans Movement (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2001).

The influence of Massachusetts Young Turks like Markey and Studds, and party stalwarts like Kennedy and O'Neill, was further enhanced by the influence of less high profile veteran politicians like Senator Paul Tsongas and Congressman Edward Boland from western Massachusetts. Both enjoyed national reputations for integrity that helped cement Massachusetts influence in Congress. As chair of the House Intelligence Committee, Boland lent a great deal of legitimacy to efforts to contain the Reagan administration's more adventurist policies in Central America. In 1983 and 1984, Congress passed a series of "Boland Amendments" designed to end covert U.S. support for the right-wing contras trying to overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. It was the Reagan administration's illegal efforts to circumvent the Boland amendment that led to the worst scandal of the Reagan years, when the administration's covert arms for hostages deals blew up into the "Iran-Contra Affair".

Lastly, the state's lone Republican in Congress, moderate Silvio Conte from western Massachusetts, greatly augmented the influence of the state's delegation. Elected to Congress in the 1950s, Conte had a reputation for independence, in 1968 becoming one of the first members of Congress from Massachusetts to speak out against the Vietnam War. His good nature and earthy sense of humor made him a popular member of Congress with influence in both parties. By the 1980s, Conte represented one of the most activist districts in the nation, western Massachusetts, which was a pioneer of both the movement against nuclear energy and the freeze movement, as well as a stronghold of Central American activism. Conte thus became an advocate of the nuclear weapons freeze and an outspoken defender of human rights in Central America, lending a bipartisan imprimatur to the state delegation's work on these issues.

By the early 1980s, the Massaehusetts delegation became the flagship in Congress leading the fight for a nuclear weapons freeze and opposing U.S. intervention in Central America. While other states like New York and California had immensely influential liberal members of Congress, no state, liberal or eonservative, had as unified a delegation as Massaehusetts' eleven Demoerats and one moderate Republican. Through the united and unusually affective Massaehusetts delegation, Bay State aetivists enjoyed a speeial influenee on mainstream national polities. That influenee was often felt first at the state level. In the 1980s, Massaehusetts freeze, antinuclear and Central American solidarity aetivists were partieularly active in state polities, which they viewed as the springboard to having a national impaet. Massachusetts activists had a strong impaet on governor Michael Dukakis, especially during his two terms in the 1980s. More a good government progressive than a New Deal liberal or post-1960s "McGovern" Demoerat, Dukakis nevertheless embraced causes dear to the aetivist left. In 1977, Dukakis was the only New England governor to refuse New Hampshire's request for state poliee to arrest the 1,414 oeeupiers at the Seabrook nuclear power plant site. Throughout his two terms in the 1980s, Dukakis delayed the Seabrook nuelear power station from going on line by refusing to submit a federally mandated evaeuation plan for Massaehusetts eommunities falling within the ten-mile "Emergeney Planning Zone" (EPZ). He likewise defied the federal government by refusing to participate in "Crisis Relocation Planning" (CRP), a eivil defense measure pushed by the Reagan administration as part of its efforts to prepare the nation for possible nuelear war. Dukakis beeame an early advoeate of a nuelear weapons freeze and commissioned a state group to study the impaet of the arms raee on Massaehusetts and to find ways for

the state to promote disarmament. In 1985, Dukakis became among the first governors to refuse to allow the state's National Guard to participate in military exercises in Central America. He later joined other governors in fighting the Honduras exercises in federal court.

During his 1988 campaign, Republican candidate George Bush sought to make the election a national referendum on Massachusetts liberalism by tying Dukakis as closely as possible to his past support for activist causes. By 1988, the two issues that helped breathe so much life into the left in the early 1980s, war in Central America and the nuclear arms race, faded from the national radar screen. The Bush campaign worked to distance itself from the Reagan administration's unpopular Central American policies, and the administration pursued serious negotiations on nuclear weapons with President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union. The ugly but effective campaign to tar Dukakis as an unpatriotic member of the American Civil Liberties Union who furloughed convicted black rapists and allowed school children to skip the Pledge of Allegiance set the stage for a resounding defeat. To many, the 1988 Dukakis presidential campaign was a swan song for post-1960s Massachusetts liberalism, which paved the way for the emergence of centrist southern Democrat Bill Clinton.[45]

In examining post-Vietnam activism and liberal politics in Massachusetts, I have decided to narrow my focus to three movements: the movement against nuclear power, the nuclear weapons freeze movement and the Central American solidarity movement. Many postscripts to the 1960s emphasize personal liberation and "identity politics" as

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[45] Charles Kenney and Robert L. Turner, Dukakis: An American Odyssey (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1988); Richard Gaines and Michael Segal, Dukakis and the Reform Impulse (Boston: Quinlan Press, 1987).

the major forces on the left to survive from the 1970s through the present. As important as feminism, gay liberation and many ethnic and racial empowerment movements have been, the focus on such movements in the era of the "culture wars" has obscured the importance of issue-centered political movements on the left. The movements in this study sought to take on economic and military institutions in a way that challenged the premises of U.S. capitalism and the cold war national security state. They all embraced a perspective that pursued the late 1960s vision of global change, but through a return to the community-based politics of the early 1960s. For these reasons, I regard them as the closest successors of the civil rights and peace movements of the 1960s. For my purposes, the issues of nuclear power, the arms race and U.S. intervention in Central America also allowed for a more focused study than the more amorphous issues of feminism, gay rights, civil rights or even a general focus on environmentalism. Further, my focus on these issue-centered movements by no means precludes a consideration of identity politics. As will be seen, feminism, in particular, played an immensely important role in reshaping the activist left in the 1970s and 1980s.

I also chose to focus on the movement against nuclear power, the freeze movement and Central American solidarity activism because of their special prominence in Massachusetts activism and politics in the 1970s and 1980s. The movement against nuclear power and nuclear weapons grew out of the early work by Massachusetts activists, demonstrating how the community politics of the post-Vietnam era worked their way up to impact first state, then national politics. In the case of Central American solidarity activism, it struck such strong roots in the state that it likewise was an ideal

topic. I decided to limit myself to these three movements so as to explore activist politics in greater depth than I could have if I had broadened the study.

This study hopes to build on several important works. Most importantly is Barbara Epstein's Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s.[46] Epstein argues that the community organizing and consensus democracy in the direct action movements of the 1970s and 1980s represented a return to the early New Left's community organizing and "participatory democracy" that was eclipsed by the sectarian, vanguard revolutionary groups of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Epstein argues that these efforts constituted a "prefigurative politics" that sought to anticipate the liberated society of the future within the movements themselves. Epstein chronicles how these attempts at "cultural revolution" sometimes clashed with the countervailing movement dynamic of efficacy.

There are several important works dealing with the movement against nuclear power. Two contemporary chronicles come from activists Anna Gyorgy and Harvey Wasserman who figure prominently in this study. Gyorgy's No Nukes: Everyone's Guide To Nuclear Power is an encyclopedic work covering local movements throughout the U.S.[47] Wasserman's Energy War: Reports from the Front, is a collection of his essays for numerous left-liberal magazines during the 1970s.[48] Jerome Price's, The Antinuclear Movement offers an excellent general overview of the movement in the

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[46] Epstein.

[47] Anna Gyorgy and Friends, No Nukes: Everyone's Guide to Nuclear Power (Boston: South End Press, 1979).

[48] Wasserman.

1970s into the 1980s.[49] The best work on Seabrook is Henry F. Bedford, Seabrook: Citizens' Politics and Nuclear Power.[50] Bedford's work focuses on the legal interveners far more than the direct action movement of the Clamshell Alliance, taking the inverse focus to Epstein's treatment of Seabrook. Christian Joppke's Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy: A Comparison of Germany and the United States supports the findings of this study.[51] Joppke argues that Germany's antinuclear movement took on an anti-state identity making it far more radical than the American movement. Joppke finds that American antinuclear activists were very much influenced by the country's revolutionary heritage and the "promise-performance gap" of American democracy. He adds that the centralization of power in Germany and the diffusion of power between the state and federal government in the U.S. likewise shaped the respective movements.

Two works are especially crucial to understanding the nuclear weapons freeze movement of the 1980s. David Meyer's Winter of Discontent: The Nuclear Freeze and American Politics is a perceptive examination of the freeze movement and its impact on American society.[52] Meyer especially focuses on relations between the national freeze movement and the media and U.S. politics. He also concentrates on the tensions between a movement's base and the leadership's desire to win mainstream acceptance. C. Douglass Waller's Congress and the Nuclear Freeze: An Inside Look at the Politics of a Mass Movement is an indispensable work by a former aide to Massachusetts

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[49] Jerome Price, The Antinuclear Movement (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982).

[50] Henry F. Bedford, Seabrook Station : Citizen Politics and Nuclear Power (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990).

[51] Christian Joppke, Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy: A Comparison of Germany and the United States (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

[52] Meyer.

Congressman Ed Markey, who led the push for a freeze resolution in Congress.[53] It is an up close account of the movement in Congress and the relations between politicians and activists.

Van Gosse's "'The North American Front': Central American Solidarity in the Reagan Era" in Mike Davis and Michael Sprinker's Reshaping the U.S. Left: Popular Struggles in the 1980s remains the best, if partisan, introduction to the solidarity movement in the 1980s.[54] Van Gosse traces the movement back to the New Left activists who supported the Cuban Revolution in the late 1950s and 1960s, a theme he develops in Where the Boys Are: Cuba, Cold War and the Making of the American Left.[55] His article suggested the title to J. Michael Waller's, The Third Current of Revolution: Inside the 'North American Front' of El Salvador's Guerrilla War.[56] Waller's study of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador seeks to link the solidarity movement and its liberal supporters to international communism. William LeoGrande's Our Own Back Yard: The United States in Central America, 1977-1992 is an exhaustive study from a liberal perspective of the issue of Central America, which focuses on the Carter and Reagan administrations' policies and especially the battles over Central America in the United States Congress.[57]

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[53] C. Douglass Waller, Congress and the Nuclear Freeze: An Insider Look at the Politics of a Mass Movement (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987).

[54] Gosse, "'The North American Front': Central American Solidarity in the Reagan Era".

[55] Gosse, Where the Boys Are: Cuba, Cold War and the Making of the American Left.

[56] J. Michael Waller.

[57] LeoGrande.

Periodization and Chapter Outline

The movements against nuclear power, the nuclear arms race and U.S. intervention in Central America generally play out in the decade and a half following the end of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. It was an age when activists continued to pursue the 1960s' internationalist vision of peace, equality and democracy through the grass-roots activism summed up in the 1970s and 1980s' slogan, "Think Globally, Act Locally". This work attempts to evaluate these movements by assessing their impact on mainstream liberalism and thus on the national political agenda. To be sure, as far as activism is concerned, state borders are in many ways an artificial entity. Thus, many activists from western Massachusetts, to some degree, had more in common with other rural activists up the Connecticut River valley in Vermont than with urban activists in Boston. Yet, the exigencies of electoral politics forced western and eastern Massachusetts activists to coordinate strategies in all the movements considered in this study. By working within the confines of a single state, I hope to illustrate more clearly the manner by which local activism was able to shape liberal politics within clearly defined electoral borders. By focusing on Massachusetts, I seek to demonstrate the manner by which the activist politics of the post-Vietnam era percolated up to have a national impact.

I have chosen to confine my study to the years between 1974 and 1990, a period I call the "post-Vietnam era". In this view, the 1960s era ends somewhere between 1973 and 1975. One could mark that end by the termination of direct U.S. military involvement in the Vietnam War in January 1973. Another benchmark for the end of the 1960s might be August 1974, when President Richard Nixon resigned from office,

arguably one of the final American casualties of the Vietnam War. Or one might simply date the transition from one era to another by the March 1975 fall of Saigon. For my purposes, I have chosen February 1974, when a former antiwar radical named Sam Lovejoy committed an act of sabotage against a weather tower at a proposed nuclear power plant site in Montague, Massachusetts, and set in motion the birth of the radical movement against nuclear power, which became the bridge from the 1960s to the post-Vietnam era.

I have decided to conclude this study with 1990, the year when the Sandinistas' defeat at the polls in Nicaragua left Central American solidarity activists deeply disillusioned and heralded the end of the last movement of this study. One could also mark the end of what I call the post-Vietnam era with the 1991 Gulf War, when President George H.W. Bush proclaimed the end of the "Vietnam Syndrome". Indeed, the war in Vietnam casts its shadow over the entire period considered here. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, activists and politicians, left and right, alluded to the war constantly, deriving different lessons but seeing the war as a common frame of reference nonetheless. Left leaning activists and liberals derived a sense of legitimacy and historical continuity from the experience of Vietnam, which more than the civil rights movement, challenged the cold war consensus of post-World War II America.

Two chapters are devoted to each of the three movements discussed in this study. The first chapter of each focuses on local Massachusetts activism and politics, with the second shifting focus to the impact of Massachusetts activists and politicians nationally. Thus, chapter I focuses on Sam Lovejoy's sabotage and the movement against nuclear power that developed in western Massachusetts. Chapter II then examines the role of

Bay State activists and liberal politicians on the controversy around the Seabrook nuclear power station, site of the largest direct action protests against nuclear power during the 1970s. Chapter III examines the birth of the nuclear weapons freeze movement in a grass-roots referendum campaign in western Massachusetts and the freeze movement's subsequent impact on state politics. Chapter IV follows Massachusetts freeze activists like Randy Kehler and Frances Crowe to the national stage, and explores the important role played by Massachusetts liberals in pushing for a freeze resolution in Congress. The study uses a slightly different format in the final two chapters. Chapter V discusses Massachusetts Central American activism at both the state and national level. Besides a brief discussion of Michael Dukakis's support for their activities, the focus is almost exclusively on the activists. The final chapter is devoted to the Massachusetts congressional delegation, which led the opposition on Capital Hill to the Reagan administration's policies. With the fight over Central America, post-Vietnam liberalism came full circle. In 1964, few liberals challenged Lyndon Johnson's Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, nor the cold war premises that led the nation into the Vietnam War. Congressional opposition to the war mounted slowly. In the 1980s, by contrast, Massachusetts liberals took the lead with other prominent national liberals like Iowa's Tom Harkin, Connecticut's Christopher Dodd, Colorado's Patricia Schroeder, California's Ron Dellums and Barbara Mikulski and Michael Barnes of Maryland in vociferously opposing what they saw as a replay of the mistakes which led the United States into Vietnam. Just as opposition to the war in Vietnam led the Nixon administration to pursue illegal activities that ultimately led to Watergate, so too did opposition to the Reagan administration's policies in Central America lead to the scandal

known as the Iran-Contra Affair. It is here, I believe, that the impact of post-Vietnam era activists on mainstream liberals and thus on national politics becomes most tangible, and I have thus chosen to complete this work with an exclusive focus on liberalism and mainstream politicians.

CHAPTER I

SAM LOVEJOY AND THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE MONTAGUE TWIN NUCLEAR POWER STATION

Crossroads: February 1974

February 1974 was a month in which the United States seemed to be slowly falling apart. Americans had become familiar with a new word, "stagflation", which described the bizarre combination of simultaneous inflation and unemployment. The nation entered its fourth month of the OPEC oil embargo, compounding an already serious energy crisis. As automobiles formed lines at gasoline stations, sometimes over a mile long and often in near freezing temperatures, indictments and convictions in the Watergate crisis kept pace with new revelations of abuses by the Nixon administration. Richard Nixon, who had won one of the largest electoral landslides in U.S. history just two years earlier, saw his poll numbers continue to erode.[1] The oil embargo and ongoing Watergate saga were joined that February by a bizarre news story that seemed to confirm the sense of exhaustion. An obscure underground revolutionary group, the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA), kidnapped newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst from her home in Berkeley, California. The press and media hung upon the tape-recorded communiqués of the SLA, each invariably ending with the slogan, "Death to the fascist insect which preys upon the life of the people!!!" Along with lengthy denunciations of U.S. "imperialism" and "fascism" were a series of demands, the most prominent of which was that Patricia Hearst's wealthy father, Randolph Hearst, set up a free food program for the poor in

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[1] Peter Carroll, It Seemed Like Nothing Happened: The Tragedy and Promise of America in the 1970s (New Brunswick, NJ: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1990).

Oakland. Americans were gripped by this revolutionary throwback to the late 1960s and early 1970s. Even the Weather Underground, the best known of the violent groups to grow out of the revolutionary dreams and frustrations of the Vietnam War era had been quiescent for some time. If the SLA heightened the sense of helplessness, vulnerability and drift that pervaded the country, however, few feared – or hoped -- the self-styled guerrillas would spark the revolution that was their avowed aim.[2]

On February 22, 1974 – the same date the ill-fated food distribution demanded by the SLA ended in riots in Oakland – a former antiwar activist named Sam Lovejoy took radical political action of a different sort in the small town of Montague, Massachusetts. To protest a proposed nuclear power station in his New England hometown, Lovejoy snuck onto the site in the middle of the night and using assorted farm tools managed to topple most of a 550-ft. weather tower. Lovejoy then hitchhiked a ride from a passing police car to the police station, where he turned himself in to the local police chief and issued a four-page statement on why he toppled the tower. Lovejoy took "full responsibility for sabotaging that outrageous symbol of a future nuclear power plant."[3]

Both the SLA's abduction of Patricia Hearst and Sam Lovejoy's sabotage were rooted in the radicalism of the 1960s. But whereas the SLA represented the movement at its burnt-out extreme, Lovejoy's action melded various tendencies from the 1960s and sought to put them to work in the changed environment of the mid-1970s. Lovejoy's sabotage incorporated the militancy of the New Left, the notion of moral witness and

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[2] *Ibid.* Also, David Boulton, The Making of Tania: The Patty Hearst Story (London: New English Library, 1975).

[3] New York Times, March 1, 1974.

civil disobedience from the civil rights movement and the alternative communal lifestyle of the counterculture. Lovejoy attempted to make these 1960s tendencies relevant through a grassroots localism that would come to define 1970s activism. The SLA envisioned an apocalyptic, utopian and violent revolution that would wipe away capitalist structures of repression and exploitation in one fell swoop. They had followed the most revolutionary, vanguard dreams of the 1960s to their terminus and eventually self-destructed in a hail of gunfire. Lovejoy took the more democratic radical visions of the 1960s and helped to plant them in the new soil of the 1970s. If the SLA represented the end of the road for the revolutionary fervor of the 1960s, Sam Lovejoy and the movement he helped mobilize was a bridge from the 1960s to the 1970s and beyond. Lovejoy made that connection in an interview published in Studs Terkel's book, American Dreams: Lost and Found. Speaking of "the Movement" of the 1960s, Lovejoy stated:

> The media is selling us on the notion of apathy and paralysis in the country. Bullshit. The movement did not die. It did the most intelligent thing it could do: it went to find a home. It went into the community. It's working, unnoticed, in the neighborhood. They're starting to blossom and make alliances, connections. I've been all over the country, and I have not been into one community where I did not meet people exactly like me. If there's ever gonna be change in America, it's gonna be because every community in America's ready for it and – boom![4]

Lovejoy's action generated a good deal of local and regional news coverage and won some national coverage in The New York Times. His protest quickly became a lightning rod for the region's nascent antinuclear movement. Over the course of the next year, Lovejoy's sabotage resulted in a highly politicized trial and a regional referendum to ban nuclear power. A documentary entitled Lovejoy's Nuclear War soon circulated

[4] Studs Terkel, American Dreams: Lost and Found (New York: Ballantine, 1980), 460-1.

among the nation's proliferating antinuclear groups. In 1976 and 1977, antinuclear activists shook the region with mass protests in Seabrook, New Hampshire, resulting in thousands of arrests. By 1979, the antinuclear movement had grown into the largest mass movement of the late 1970s, with a large "No Nukes!" rally in Washington, D.C., the star-studded "No Nukes!" concert at Madison Square Garden and the eerily prophetic film, The China Syndrome, released just months before the near nuclear meltdown at Three Mile Island, Pennsylvania.[5] Lovejoy's action would also provoke a backlash and counter-offensive by the nuclear industry and organized labor, the former viewing the dawning antinuclear movement as a threat to profits and the latter as a threat to jobs. In western Massachusetts this resulted in an unusual corporate-labor alliance to combat the antinuclear referendum that grew out of Lovejoy's action. The corporate-labor strategy forged in western Massachusetts became a model for similar antinuclear campaigns, especially the 1976 California referendum on nuclear power. The western Massachusetts antinuclear movement galvanized by Lovejoy also put the area's liberal Democratic state Senator John Olver on the spot, torn between his loyalty to organized labor and his solicitation of the growing environmental vote. Thus, by forcing the issue, Lovejoy revealed a fault line within the Democratic Party that would confront liberals nationally throughout the decade.

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[5] Carroll; Jerome Price, The Antinuclear Movement (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982); Anna Gyorgy, ed., No Nukes: Everyone's Guide to Nuclear Power (Boston: South End Press, 1979); Harvey Wasserman, Energy Wars: Reports from the Front (Westport, Conn.: Lawrence Hill and Co., 1979).

Lovejoy's sabotage resulted from a massive shift toward nuclear energy throughout the United States. The increasingly severe energy crisis, with its concomitant fear of dependence on foreign oil, spurred the Nixon administration to accelerate the construction of nuclear power plants. At the time of Lovejoy's action, there were forty-two nuclear plants running in the United States, fifty-six under construction and 101 on order.[6] In New England, the Connecticut based Northeast Utilities (NU) announced on December 31, 1973 its plans to build twin nuclear reactors in the quiet, rural town of Montague, Massachusetts. New England, a region with few indigenous sources of coal, natural gas or oil, was more dependent on foreign oil than any other region of the United States. This dependency was compounded by New England's cold winters. As a result, New England led the way in the development of nuclear power plants, receiving twenty percent of its energy from nuclear power as compared to five percent for the nation as a whole.[7]

When NU announced its plans to build its $1.5 billion, 1150 megawatt twin nuclear reactors in Montague, it was hardly new to the business of nuclear power. NU customers received 33% of their energy from nuclear energy. NU's investments in nuclear energy spanned the New England region. In 1974, NU already owned thirty-four percent of the Yankee Rowe plant in Massachusetts; forty-four percent of Connecticut Yankee; fifteen percent of Yankee Maine; twelve percent of Vermont Yankee; and 100 percent of Millstone I in Connecticut. Further, NU was in the process of constructing a

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[6] Carroll, 123.

[7] "Twin Nuclear Plants: Blessing or Curse?" Springfield Union and Springfield Republican, January 6 and 7, 1974.

Millstone II nuclear reactor in Connecticut and had plans on the drawing board for a Millstone III. Along with other New England utilities, NU was also investing in the proposed nuclear plants at Plymouth, Massachusetts and Seabrook, New Hampshire.[8] Still, NU deemed New England's constellation of nuclear power plants to be insufficient to meet the region's energy needs. Taking note of the national energy crisis and New England's cold winters, heavy industry and dearth of energy sources, NU Director of Research Dr. Harold Lurie stated, "The only conclusion you can draw, based on the logic of the situation, is to build more nuclear power plants in New England and to build them as fast as you can."[9]

NU wasted no time in disseminating its views of the benefits of nuclear power. In pamphlets and bulletins like "The Way it Is: Talking About Nuclear Power" and "Montague Nuclear Station Fact Sheet", NU made its case that nuclear power would produce abundantly cheap energy, that it was a cleaner source of energy than fossil fuels, and that the risk of an accident was negligible. One such pamphlet extolling the virtues of nuclear power had a photo on the inner flap of children wading in the ocean silhouetted by the Millstone I nuclear power station just several hundred yards behind them. On the back flap was a photo of a softball game and picnic taking place on the other side of the Connecticut River from the Yankee nuclear plant in Hadum, Connecticut. The message was clear: nuclear power was a benign source of energy,

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[8] "Basis for Northeast Utilities Commitment to Nuclear Power", NU Study, August 6, 1974. Box 7, Folder 97, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Locals 36,161, 707 and 710, Records, 1929-1985, series 1: Local 36, 1969-1985, Subseries 4: Nuclear Energy, MS 107, Special Collections and Archives, WEB Dubois Library, University of Massachusetts, Amherst (hereinafter cited as IBEW).

[9] "Twin Nuclear Plants: Blessing or Curse?" Springfield Union and Springfield Republican, January 6, 1974.

elearly no threat to such wholesome family activities as a day at the beach or a Sunday softball game.[10]

Roughly two thirds of the 8,500 residents of Montague supported the building of the plants in their town, entieed by the prospect of huge tax cuts – Yankee Rowe just 25 miles north paid 90% of that town's taxes – and raeked by an unemployment rate of 8% compared to 6% for the state as a whole.[11] In the fall of 1973, the Valley Advocate, an alternative weekly, interviewed loeal residents and found them generally reeeptive to the NU plants, whieh had been approved by the Montague town government. A jeweler from nearby Turners Falls stated, "They wouldn't build them if they weren't safe. You can't stop progress. Besides, I'm an optimist." Jobs and taxes topped the list of reasons to support the reactors. Said one Montague resident, "Why they're talking about work for 4,000 people! This town eould use some of that." A loeal businessman declared, "Taxes. Why our taxes would go way down with something like this!" Another resident welcomed the plants merely as something to shake up the area's sleepy rural life: "I've been here sixty years and nothing's changed. This would shake things up a little."[12]

Not all residents supported the plants, however. A science professor at the nearby University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Dr. David Ingless, voieed concerns that soon beeame hallmarks of the antinuelear movement: "I consider it irresponsible to go ahead building new nuelear plants... Of the many dangers, the three that eoncern me most are the likely diversion of plutonium to make atom bombs for terrorists, the possibility of

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[10] "The Way It Is", NU Information Bulletin, July, 1975; "Montague Nuclear Power Station Fact Sheet", *circa* 1974; Nuclear Power: Issues and Answers", NU pamphlet. Box 7, Folder 97, IBEW.

[11] "Twin Plants: Blessing or Curse?" Springfield Union and Springfield Republican, January 10, 1974; Wasserman, 31; Gyorgy, 399.

[12] Valley Advocate, September 19, 1973, 10-11.

disastrous accident at nuclear plants, and the unsolved problem of permanent storage of high level radioactive wastes."[13]

Still, opposition to the plants was small in 1973. Although local mainstream environmental groups such as the Montague Concerns Group sought to spur debate and oppose the plants through legal channels, the recent history of such tactics was not encouraging. The Massachusetts Public Interest Research Group (MASSPIRG) expressed skepticism of the ability of legal interventions ability to stop the Montague plants. In a report issued a mere month before Lovejoy toppled the towers, MASSPIRG declared:

> Unfortunately, the government regulatory structure has left little room for citizen participation in such decisions. A yearlong study supported by a National Science Foundation grant and completed last October harshly criticized the operation of the AEC's Atomic Safety and Licensing Board... Citizen groups, which have entered the debate as nuclear interveners in plant licensing processes have gained, in general, only slight concessions in plant design, or short delays in their construction. And nuclear opponents warn that this type of intervention may be counter productive, diverting attention and energies from the essential moral issue raised by nuclear power plants.[14]

With mainstream antinuclear groups making little headway, opposition to the plants soon arose from another quarter. Rural, western New England had undergone many changes in the decade prior to 1974. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, many young people involved with the counterculture headed for the countryside to escape the bustle of the cities and an increasingly nihilistic drug culture that was losing its

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[13] *Ibid.*

[14] "Preliminary Report on Nuclear Power Plants", MASS PIRG, Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts. (Hereinafter cited as The Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection. The Crowe Papers in the Sophia Smith Collection will be distinguished in the notes from the Frances Crowe Private Papers, Northampton, Massachusetts, which are still in the personal possession of Frances Crowe and made available to the author.)

connections to the counterculture's earlier ideals. These "hippies" sought to live out their communitarian visions in harmony with nature in the deserts of the southwest (especially around Taos, New Mexico), the woodlands of the northwest (which was populated by the exodus from the San Francisco Bay area) and the farmlands of New England.[15] Rural western Massachusetts, with its rolling hills and Berkshire mountains, vast woodlands, open fields and fertile farms lining the Connecticut River valley, was comprised predominantly of small towns, several colleges and a few aging rust-belt cities such as Springfield, Holyoke and Chicopee. Like Vermont to the north, the area was a magnet for the new communes of the late 1960s.

More than communes in other parts of the country, many of those in New England tended to be populated by individuals whose background was in the New Left. In western Massachusetts and southern Vermont, three "sister" communes played a key role in shaping the antinuclear politics of the 1970s. The largest was the Montague Farm, also known as the "Old Ripley Farm" or the "Chestnut Hill Farm", whose fluid population ranged anywhere from twenty to thirty people. Another commune of people close to those in Montague grew in neighboring Wendell. Both Massachusetts communes had close ties to the Packers Corner Farm, just over the border in southern Vermont. These communes grew out of a split in the Liberation News Service (LNS), the radical New Left news outlet founded by Marshall Bloom and Raymond Mungo in the summer of 1967. The LNS had grown rapidly, attracting talented New Left

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[15] On the national commune movement, see Terry Anderson, The Sixties (New York: Longman, 1999) chapters 5 and 7; Richard Fairfield, Communes, USA: A Personal Tour (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1977); Gilbert Zicklin, Countercultural Communes: A Sociological Perspective (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1983); and Timothy Miller, The 60s Communes: Hippies and Beyond (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1999).

journalists such as Harvey Wasserman and Marty Jezer to its staff and by the fall of 1967 acquired an enthusiastic national following. The LNS was originally located in Washington, D.C. but decided in the wake of the April 1968 riots that followed Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination, to relocate to New York City, which had become more central to New Left activity. In New York, the LNS joined forces with radicals associated with Columbia University's SDS, but before long the new LNS broke into "Washington" and "New York" factions, with the former moving in a countercultural direction and the latter in a sectarian Marxist direction. In the summer of 1968, the Washington faction led by LNS founder Marshall Bloom undertook a daring heist of the LNS printing press and made off to rural western Massachusetts. Others such as Raymond Mungo and Marty Jezer relocated to Vermont. The rural refugees had become disgusted with urban life and New Left infighting, and now sought to usher in the "New Age" through personal transformation and creating a new communal society far removed from the corruptions of the old. Slowly, the rural LNS ceased printing and gradually moved further away from activist politics.[16]

The communes that grew out of the LNS fallout developed a strong sense of community, and with their common background and strong affinity, would provide a strong base for antinuclear activism in the mid-1970s. One activist, future leader of the national nuclear weapons freeze movement Randy Kehler, described the people at

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[16] The story of the Liberation News Service is told in Raymond Mungo, Famous Long Ago: My Life and Hard Times with the Liberation News Service (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970); the founding of the Packers Corner Farm in Vermont is described in Raymond Mungo, Total Loss Farm (New York: Dutton, 1970); the founding of the Montague Farm is recounted by Stephen Diamond in What the Trees Said: Life on a New Age Farm (New York: Dell Publishing, 1970).

Montague, Wendell and Packers Corner as "One family with three locations."[17] Another activist who had just moved to the area, Vince O'Connor, recalled, "The [Montague] Farm was the spiritual organizational center of things… You have people in place who are leading regular lives but their thinking has been transformed. They've been involved in a whole bunch of different movements."[18] By 1974, as these communes focused on organic farming, they were simultaneously emerging from their non-activist slumber with a growing interest in the environmental movement. In western Massachusetts, they would soon overshadow mainstream organizations such as the Montague Nuclear Concerns Group as the cutting edge of the antinuclear movement. Sam Lovejoy, who moved to the Montague Farm in 1969, recalled:

> We were living in a commune… and living communally, I thought, was a political statement. The dynamic was from 1969 to 1972, we were building fences, repairing barns, insulating house, organizing tractors, growing food. It took three solid years, three growing seasons, to get the rhythm down, and it was truly 1973, which was the first time we could sit back and say, 'O.K., we sunk our roots, we got our economic base in place, now what's gonna happen?'[19]

The New Age communes of western Massachusetts put down roots in an area with a strong tradition of religious activism stemming from the area's historic peace churches, which included Quakers, Unitarians and Congregationalists. Long before the migration of New Left activists and hippies to the region, western Massachusetts had a history of rural resistance to centralized power that reached back to Daniel Shay's

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[17] Telephone interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003. Kehler himself had just moved to western Massachusetts and became acquainted with the communes through his life long partner Betsy Corner, then calling herself "Cornwoman" and living on the Wendell commune. According to Kehler, "I was an in-law. Betsy was one of the family."

[18] Interview with Vince O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

[19] Interview with Same Lovejoy, May 24, 2003.

rebellion in 1787.[20] The region had also been a stronghold of nineteenth century abolitionism and experiments with utopian communities led by the likes of Sojourner Truth.[21] Further, the area was home to numerous colleges and universities, many of which had become highly politicized in the late 1960s and early 1970s. New England's headlong rush to develop nuclear energy and the region's numerous political radicals was a combustible combination that made it almost inevitable that western Massachusetts would be the nation's first major battleground over nuclear power. Vince O'Connor said of NU's decision to place the Montague reactors near an area that had such experienced activists, "They had no idea what a hornet's nest they stirred up... [It was] the worst corporate decision an industry has ever made. They put it in the wrong place..."[22] Sam Lovejoy remembered, "I didn't go after the nuke. The nuke came to me. I had no idea what the issue would have been. But I am positive by 1974 I would have been doing something organizationally, politically... Whatever the issue was, I'm certain there was this throbbing energy available that just needed a trigger."[23]

Despite the potentially broad radical base in western Massachusetts, opposition to the Montague reactors remained relatively small prior to Lovejoy's sabotage. The mantle of opposition was carried largely by the respectable Montague Nuclear Concerns Group, comprised mostly of those in academia and centered largely on a conventional

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[20] Leonard L. Richards, Shay's Rebellion: The American Revolution's Last Battle (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).

[21] Edene Stetson and Linda David, Glorying in Tribulation: The Lifework of Sojourner Truth (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1994); Jacqueline Bernard, Journey Toward Freedom: The Story of Sojourner Truth (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1990); Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilenz, The Kingdom of Matthias (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

[22] Interview with Vince O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

[23] Interview with Sam Lovejoy, May 24, 2003.

strategy. They were joined in the fall of 1973 by Nuclear Objectors for a Pure Environment (NOPE), which was formed by a handful of activists on the Montague Farm.[24] Both of these groups, though vastly different in style, expressed similar concerns about the environmental impact of low level radiation, the transport and storage of nuclear waste, which had a radioactive half-life of over 100,000 years, the susceptibility of nuclear generators to terrorist attack and, most crucially, the danger of nuclear reactor core meltdowns and the problem of evacuation. In January, 1974, in the first of a series of articles entitled, "Twin Reactors: Blessing or Curse?" one of the area's major newspapers, the Springfield Union and Springfield Republican stated prophetically, "No one seems sure whether the nuclear debate in Montague will become a full fledged controversy before the year is over."[25]

Twenty-seven year old Sam Lovejoy was determined to make the issue a "full fledged controversy". Lovejoy had grown up in western Massachusetts and spent most of his life in the region. As a promising high school student in the post-Sputnik era, Lovejoy had won a National Sciences Foundation Award. He went on to graduate from Amherst College with a degree in political science. During the 1960s, Lovejoy became deeply involved in the movement against the war in Vietnam. In the late 1960s, Lovejoy was the New England regional coordinator of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and was heavily involved with the first Venceramos Brigades to go to Cuba. Lovejoy felt an affinity for Chile and the rising socialist movement led by Salvadore Allende. Lovejoy went to Cuba with the Venceramos Brigades in the hope of improving his

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[24] Wasserman, 27-32; Gyorgy, 393-5.

[25] "Twin Plants: Blessing or Curse?" Springfield Union and Springfield Republican, January 6 and 7, 1974.

Spanish and making contacts with Chileans in anticipation of moving to Chile to take part in the socialist struggle there. In Cuba, while cutting sugar cane, Lovejoy was turned off by the "nationalist focus" of many fellow brigidistas. Lovejoy, who grew up on a farm, was struck by how few of the U.S. leftists seemed to have ever worked a day of hard labor in their lives. The experience with middle class North American activists who seemed out of place in tropical Cuba helped move Lovejoy from an internationalist focus toward the local activism being embraced by much of the antiwar movement with its call to "bring the war home". He recalled, "What happened in Cuba was I really did believe that all politics is local, which Tip O'Neill said, but I think that's ultimately true. If you can't talk to your neighbors about political issues, then how are you gonna ever change national policies?" According to Lovejoy, "While I was there, I changed my mind about going to Chile and decided when I come home I wouldn't take six months of Spanish classes and work my ass off to save money and everything to go to Chile, but rather stay at the communal farm I had moved to, and sink my root here, cause I thought that was more important than a single individual going to help the Chileans."[26]

In late 1969, Lovejoy became a full-time resident of the Montague Farm, growing organic vegetables and marijuana.[27] For Lovejoy, the "social rules rebellion" and personal transformation of the 1960s counterculture was as political as civil rights or antiwar organizing: "There was the cultural revolution. Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll was a true other liberation that occurred, and affected people immensely, and cannot be

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[26] Interview with Sam Lovejoy, May 24, 2003.

[27] New York Times, March 1, 1974.

downplayed… That shared [generational] experience did reinforce a shared [political] base."[28]

By February 1974, Lovejoy had lived and worked on the farm for five years. His friends included a nucleus of activists who would play major roles, first in the regional, and later in the national antinuclear movement. One was Anna Gyorgy, an antiwar activist who would publish No Nukes: Everyone's Guide to Nuclear Power in 1979, an encyclopedic guide to local antinuclear movements around the country and something of an antinuclear bible in the movement. Lovejoy's associates also included Harvey Wasserman, a husky, good-natured journalist known to friends as "Sluggo" for his resemblance to the character in the "Nancy" comic strips. Wasserman too was active in the New Left. He had graduated from the University of Michigan and while attending the University of Chicago as a Wilson Fellow became one of the LNS's feature journalists.[29] After teaching at a low-income high school in New York in 1968, Wasserman, like his comrades, made the transition to rural life. Wasserman would emerge by 1976 as the antinuclear movement's premier activist-journalist. His series of frontline reports for The Nation during the Seabrook protests of 1976-7, and his numerous articles for The Village Voice, WIN, New Age and other left-liberal journals, formed the basis of his 1979 book, Energy Wars: Reports from the Front.[30] Wasserman would also become a major spokesperson for the movement throughout the 1970s, frequently sought out for comment by such mainstream press as The New York Times

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[28] Interview with Sam Lovejoy, May 24, 2003.

[29] Mungo, Famous Long Ago: My Life and Hard Times at the Liberation News Service, 71; Diamond, 44-5.

[30] Wasserman.

and Boston Globe. Lovejoy also became friends with Randy Kehler, who had spent eighteen months in prison for draft refusal in 1970-1, became active in antinuclear energy politics in the mid-1970s and would use lessons from that movement to launch the nuclear weapons freeze movement in 1980.[31] Thus, as Lovejoy contemplated taking action against the Montague Nuclear Power Station, individuals who later became some of the most vocal, visible and active members of the movement surrounded him.

Despite his association with such dedicated activists, Lovejoy has always insisted he acted alone when he toppled the tower. During his trial, Lovejoy stated that the others in his circle knew he was planning something, perhaps even toppling the tower, but were never sure if Lovejoy was serious. Lovejoy spent three months prior to toppling the tower researching nuclear energy, writing and rewriting a statement he planned to turn over to the police and the press after the action, and surveying the construction site. He planned his action to be an act of moral witness designed to galvanize the area's loose antinuclear movement and move it toward more militant opposition to the twin reactors. According to Lovejoy, "Environmental groups [had] no civil disobedience psychology… I wanted to get the movement off the ground in this area. But I also wanted to talk to people nationally."[32]

Lovejoy planned his action for February 22, 1974, to correspond with George Washington's birthday. As the date approached, Lovejoy's thoughts focused less on the broad philosophy behind his action and increasingly on the practical questions raised by

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[31] Telephone interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

[32] The Saboteur, An Interview with Samuel Lovejoy by Kent Robinson, March 15, 1975. MS 224, pg. 55. Special Collections and Archives, WEB Dubois Library, University of Massachusetts, Amherst (hereinafter cited as The Saboteur).

his intended sabotage. Having scoped the site on several occasions, Lovejoy knew from scattered beer bottles and discarded condoms that the site was a popular late night *rendezvous* point for many of the area's teenagers. Lovejoy was also worried about any possible police presence, both for the safety of the police when the tower came down and from fear of being caught before his action was complete. Looking back a year later, Lovejoy told an interviewer, "I was really worried that someone would get hurt, other than myself. I was worried about getting hurt but I didn't want, under any circumstances, anybody else to get hurt. I was really worried about the idea that in the middle of working, say, the cops walked in on foot to just check out the thing for some routine security check or for some weird reason. And I would have to like yell to them to get out of the way, because something might happen that I didn't have fully in control."[33]

Beyond practical considerations, Lovejoy was unsure how friends and others in the community would receive his destructive and militant form of protest. Lovejoy recalled, "I was worried about all the hippies and all the radicals in the area. I was worried about all the communes in the area. I was worried about all the antinuclear people. I was worried about people who basically got along with me but were 'straight' and I was worried about losing friends because I had done something that they would not be able to deal with."[34] Despite these pangs of doubt, Lovejoy decided he would go through with his action.

By the eve of his sabotage, Lovejoy was fully prepared. As he recalled, "...I had mulled it through so much that basically the doing of the act was like just doing a

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[33] *Ibid.*, 5.

[34] *Ibid.*, 54.

rehearsal all over again."[35] He planned to topple the 550-foot weather tower that collected meteorological data by releasing the taught 750-foot suspension cable wires anchoring the tower to the ground. This required loosening very tight turnbuckles and removing tight-fitting pins. Lovejoy replied "... of course, the biggest problem I had was thinking about myself getting cut in half... like a pound of butter with a hot knife if these cables let go and sprang back at me; you know there would be no Sam Lovejoy."[36]

Having worked through the logistics one more time, Lovejoy set out for the tower in the cold and crisp 15-degree night of February 22. Although a recent snow had melted on the streets, there was still 6-8 inches of snow in the woods through which he trekked to the construction site. Lovejoy dressed darkly in brown pants and a black windbreaker, bringing with him an assortment of tools in a tightly tied leather bag and a penlight with which to see in the darkness. The penlight proved unnecessary as the moon illuminated the snow-covered landscape. Lovejoy was surprised by the amount of noise that reverberated through the woods as his boots trod through the crusty snow, raising fears of premature discovery. After a long march through the "scrubby and tangly" woods, he reached the site. Lovejoy scaled a metal fence that surrounded the base of the weather tower and went to work trying to loosen the turnbuckles that he hoped would undo the suspension cable wires and send the tower crashing to the ground.[37]

The strobe light atop the meteorological tower blinked on and off, alternately illuminating the area around Lovejoy and then returning it to darkness. The effect was

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[35] *Ibid.*, 8.

[36] *Ibid.*, 12.

[37] *Ibid.*, 13-18.

surreal as Lovejoy commenced banging to loosen the buckles. "It was hypnotic," Lovejoy recalled. The banging "made so much noise I couldn't believe it."[38] On another occasion, Lovejoy stated, "It was so noisy out there on the Montague Plains for a minute, I'm surprised the entire [town of] Montague didn't wake up."[39] After twenty minutes of banging, the first cable was loosed, unleashing a loud metallic "twang" as it snapped free. Breathing hard from his exertion, Lovejoy took a break. "I sort of bunkered down," Lovejoy recounted in 1975, "and sat there for a minute waiting for anybody to come and nobody came and that totally blew my mind. No dogs barked, nothing. It was like all this noise, [a] really clear night, you can hear incredibly long ways. If someone was out there, they would have heard it for sure, miles away they would have heard it."[40] Lovejoy lit up a Kool cigarette, composed himself and took stock of the situation. He wanted to leave no evidence connecting him to the tower so that only he himself could prove he had committed the sabotage. Lovejoy pocketed the cigarette filter "so that no one could find out the saboteur smoked Kools" and to remove the evidence.[41]

Lovejoy returned to work. Once again the sounds of banging and clanging echoed through the crisp night air. After twenty to thirty minutes, the second cable broke free. After another short break, he went to work on the final cable. When the last cable snapped free, the top half of the tower wobbled precariously back and forth. Lovejoy's

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[38] *Ibid.*, 13.

[39] Lovejoy's Nuclear War, a documentary by Green Mountain Post Film Co-Op, Turners Falls, 1974. Produced by Dan Keller and Charles Light.

[40] The Saboteur, 14.

[41] *Ibid.*, 14.

heart sank as the top lurched back into place. Then suddenly, the strobe light at the top of the tower went dark and the top 349 feet of the 550-ft. structure came crashing down into the nearby woods, making what Lovejoy described as "a thunderous roar. THE THING CAME DOWN!"[42] The next day when police and workers examined the fallen tower, the clock on the meteorological recording box was stopped at 2:50 a.m.[43]

The saboteur surveyed his handiwork with mixed feelings. He had hoped to bring down the entire tower and felt disappointed as he turned his gaze from the wreckage in the woods to the 140-ft. stump of tower that remained solidly planted in the ground. Nevertheless, he knew the 349-ft. part of the tower that lay mangled in the woods conveyed the point he had set out to make.[44]

A year later, Lovejoy recounted the night in an interview with a University of Massachusetts graduate student. He repeatedly used the term "romantic" to describe how he felt when setting off to topple the tower. He described feeling like an "environmental Viet Cong". Lovejoy declared, "I had set out on a mission. I was the Viet Cong. I was an American revolutionary. I was the saboteur. I was a romantic idealist that was in this utopian action thing."[45] If Lovejoy's trek to the tower was imbued with a romantic aura, his retreat after toppling the tower would better be described as a comedy of errors with a touch of Key Stone Cops thrown in. Lovejoy walked briskly from the site and stashed his bag of tools in the woods about two miles away. With his statement in his pocket, Lovejoy continued to hike through the woods toward the nearby town of Turners Falls.

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[42] *Ibid.*, 25.

[43] New York Times, March 1, 1974.

[44] *Ibid.*

[45] The Saboteur, 52.

Lovejoy then heard very aggressive barking from two dogs in the distance. From out of the forest thicket into the small clearing where he stood emerged two snarling German shepherds, who branched out and flanked Lovejoy to his left and right. He froze, thinking, "German Shepherds. Bad Vibes!"[46] Looking back, Lovejoy recalls thinking: "Oh my God! I've done this giant political stunt; I've taken on this whole political-criminal reality; I've attacked this nuclear power plant thing in this total direct-action-civil-disobedience [way] ... I got this political statement I've been formulating for months... and [now] these dogs are chasing me, man."[47] He thought what an anticlimax it would be if his action ended with his being mauled by German shepherds in the middle of the woods. Lovejoy fantasized "dragging myself to the street and waving down a car, exclaiming, 'ahhh, dogs attacked me, and [by the way] I tipped over the tower...'"[48] Lovejoy alternately sought to mollify the dogs – "nice dogs" – and intimidate them by growling back. Both tactics only elicited more growls. Lovejoy continued to stand motionless, until having made their point or becoming bored, his canine antagonists retreated back into the woods from whence they had come.[49]

Finally, Lovejoy reached the road to Turners Falls, where he planned to turn himself in at the local police station. Hitchhiking on a dark country road in the middle of the night proved difficult. There were few cars on the roads and the first two Lovejoy attempted to hail passed him by. He had better luck with the third car, a police cruiser. The time was 3:55 a.m. Lovejoy prevailed upon the hesitant officers to give him a lift to

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[46] *Ibid.*, 22.

[47] *Ibid.*, 21.

[48] *Ibid.*, 22.

[49] *Ibid.*, 22.

the Turners Falls police station. The Montague area being sparsely populated, locals knew most of the police officers who patrolled the area. In the back of the police car, Lovejoy recognized one of the officers from a marijuana bust at the Montague Farm in 1971. Lovejoy remembered how at that time eleven officers – whom he described as "pigs" and "really sick" – burst onto the commune, guns drawn, and impounded not only the homegrown marijuana they found but also large quantities of legal organic herbs they had mistaken for *cannabis*. He also recognized one of the officers as the cop who several weeks earlier had shot a seventeen-year old man in the first Montague shooting since 1959.[50]

The police cruiser deposited Lovejoy at the Turners Falls police station at 4 a.m. On overnight duty was Sgt. Richard H. Cade, one of the few police officers Lovejoy respected. Speaking of Cade a year later, Lovejoy said, he "doesn't have a militant, sick fascist vibe to him. He's not a 'pig'; on a level, you know, he's just a real decent guy who happens to be a policeman."[51] Lovejoy explained to Sgt. Cade how he had just toppled the tower and was now turning himself in. Cade told Lovejoy that he simply didn't believe him. Taken aback, Lovejoy continued to try to persuade the police sergeant that he'd actually committed the crime to which he was confessing. Cade then radioed the officers who moments earlier had dropped Lovejoy off at the station. The two officers radioed back that they'd just been by the construction site and the lights on the tower were blinking. Exasperated, Lovejoy argued that this was impossible since he had toppled the tower well over an hour ago. More to satisfy Lovejoy than anything else,

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[50] *Ibid.*, 25.

[51] *Ibid.*, 27.

Cade radioed back to the squad car and instructed the officers to drive by the site and double check. Ten minutes later the officers arrived at the site and radioed back to Cade that the lights were indeed out. Cade then ordered the officers to proceed by foot and report back by walkie-talkie. Moments later they reported: "My God! Looks like an airplane hit it about half way up."[52]

If Lovejoy thought he'd finally proven his culpability, he was mistaken. Sgt. Cade, refusing to believe one man could have done such damage, phoned local airports to see if they reported any missing planes. At his wit's end, Lovejoy protested that if a plane had hit the tower half way up, surely the plane wreckage would be nearby. When local airports called back to report all their planes accounted for, Sgt. Cade at last placed Sam Lovejoy under arrest and accepted his typed statement justifying his destruction of the weather tower. As they waited for Lovejoy's lawyer, Sgt. Cade described how *he* would have felled the tower. Lovejoy argued that all of Sgt. Cade's proposals for toppling the tower were impractical. Cade chided Lovejoy, hitting him where he felt most vulnerable: "I'd be awfully disappointed if I didn't get the whole thing down."[53]

Lovejoy's lawyer, Thomas Lesser, arrived by dawn. Like Lovejoy, Lesser was a product of the counterculture. With long, pony-tailed black hair and a thick black beard, Lesser was "a hippie lawyer" with an "Eastern mysticism orientation, a little bit heavy."[54] After consulting with Lovejoy, Lesser asked Sgt. Cade for the statement so he could make copies of it. He promised to return the statement to Lovejoy, who in turn

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[52] *Ibid.*, 29-31.

[53] *Ibid.*, 31.

[54] *Ibid.*, 45.

promised to turn it back over to Cade. Cade then put Lovejoy in a cold cell with an intoxicated local youth. Shortly thereafter, Cade's superior, Police Chief Edward W. Hughes, arrived and, when apprised of the situation, sharply criticized Cade for letting go of the statement, the only tangible evidence linking Lovejoy with the destruction of the tower. Cade insisted that Lovejoy could be trusted to hand the statement back to the police. Later that morning, Lesser returned the statement to his client, who defiantly refused to hand it over to the police chief, insisting he'd only surrender the document to Sgt. Cade.[55]

Around 8 p.m., Lovejoy was transported from the Turners Falls police station to the district court in nearby Greenfield. The judge, William Ball, berated Lovejoy at length, comparing his action to the recent terrorism of the Symbionese Liberation Army. Lovejoy recalled, "When I walked into court for the arraignment, the judge absolutely flipped out. He actually brought it up and insinuated I was a terrorist as well. And the analogy between the kidnapping of Patty [Hearst], and Sam {Lovejoy] was a pretty disturbing thought."[56] The district attorney pressed Lovejoy to name accomplices, hoping to lodge a conspiracy charge. Lovejoy, in his own words, "went ballistic". He insisted that although he had bandied about certain actions, even toppling the tower, with his friends, they were never quite sure "whether that was just Sam fantasizing a little bit too much."[57] The effort to obtain a conspiracy charge having failed, the Court stuck with

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[55] *Ibid.*, 41.

[56] Interview with Sam Lovejoy May 24, 2003. Lovejoy said "The SLA was a cult [that] twisted the rhetoric [of the movement]." Lovejoy was more favorable, however, to the Weathermen. He said that while in Cuba he was with fifty Weatherpeople, as they then began to call themselves, when news arrived of the police murder of Black Panther Fred Hampton in Chicago, which soon led to the announcement that the Weatherpeople were going to become the Weather Underground.

[57] The Saboteur, 47.

the charges first lodged when Sgt. Cade arrested Lovejoy: "willful and malicious destruction of personal property". The charge would play a crucial role in Lovejoy's acquittal. As he later said, he could have been charged with trespassing, breaking and entering, destroying a fence, burglary and tampering with utilities, "Basically they screwed up on a lot of levels. I could have been charged with eleven years worth of crimes. They could have thrown the book at me. Instead they went for broke. They went and charged me with one crime: The strongest crime... If you really want to be 'law and order', they blew it."[58]

By the time Lovejoy was asked how he pled to the charge, many of his friends had gotten news of Lovejoy's arrest and had converged upon the Greenfield District Court. When Lovejoy answered the charge by pleading "absolutely not guilty", a cheer went up from his supporters in the courtroom.[59] Finally, after a long and eventful night, Judge Ball released Lovejoy on his own recognizance. Lovejoy went home, where he "bullshitted with about 8,000 fucking reporters and then went to bed."[60]

News of Lovejoy's action electrified western Massachusetts, polarizing the region into pro- and anti-Lovejoy camps. Lovejoy's action brought to the surface not only the political differences over nuclear energy, but also the fissures between more traditional residents and the area's growing number of young people leading a countercultural lifestyle. The Greenfield Recorder, in a front-page essay later that day entitled "Freedom Threatened," compared Lovejoy to Adolf Hitler and denounced his

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[58] *Ibid.*, 50.

[59] *Ibid.*, 45. Also, Lovejoy's Nuclear War.

[60] *Ibid.*, 45.

sabotage as an act of "savagery" and "terrorism". [61] Montague selectman, Donald Skole declared Lovejoy to be "a nut" and asked, "... What Mr. Lovejoy would feel like if I decided to burn down his house because I didn't like his way of living? I think they should lock him up and throw away the key. This seems to be the whole psychosis of the country. If you don't like something, you take the law into your own hands and blow it up." [62] Greenfield Recorder columnist Neil R. Perry, referring to Lovejoy as "Strangelovejoy", denounced him as a "self appointed savior of the people" and compared his action and justification to the SLA, declaring, "Isn't someone called 'Cinque' in the Symbionese Liberation Army uttering similar thoughts as he tries to explain the kidnapping of 21-year old daughter of Randolph A. Hearst – that alleged symbol of fascist corporatism?"[63]

Lovejoy's action likewise alienated the area's mainstream antinuclear movement. Portia Weiskel of Leverett, speaking for the New England Coalition on Nuclear Pollution, stated, "This is not a tactic that we in any way approve. We were shocked to hear about this and feel the place for debate on nuclear power is in the press, debates, lectures and in the courts. We feel there isn't very much chance for the individual to do much. Nonetheless we want to say this is a stupid act that we very much oppose."[64] A month later, Ralph Nader responded to Lovejoy's action during an antinuclear speech at

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[61] "Freedom Threatened", Greenfield Recorder, February 22, 1974, 1. Also quoted in the New York Times, March 1, 1974.

[62] *Ibid.*, 2.

[63] "Jack and the Nuclear Beanstalk", Greenfield Recorder, February 23, 1974, 5.

[64] Greenfield Recorder, February 22, 1974, 2.

the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, declaring that the sabotage was "not my style... It was not the way I would have handled it."[65] Lovejoy later said of Nader:

> Nader had a very difficult time for a short period of time, trying to figure out how to deal with us direct action types, but he's got a creative mind and started figuring out ways he could assist us informationally... He was a little bit nervous of me, he didn't want to get dragged down in the media by hanging out with antiwar saboteurs.[66]

At the same time, Lovejoy's action galvanized much of the area's activist left, just as he had hoped. According to longtime Northampton resident and American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) activist Frances Crowe, the antinuclear movement "really exploded after Sam cut the tower down... It sent a message to everybody that this was serious business and we better get to work... [Sam] unleashed an awful lot of energy."[67] Randy Kehler received a call from Lovejoy the next day. Lovejoy asked Kehler to look out at the horizon and see if anything looked different. For many, the tower had become an eyesore visible for miles away, especially at night when its lights blinked. "Notice anything different over the horizon?" Lovejoy asked. As it was day, it still hadn't registered upon Kehler. "C'mon, man! Look out the window!" Lovejoy prodded. After still registering a blank, Lovejoy exclaimed to Kehler, "The tower's down! I knocked the tower down!" Kehler stated almost thirty years later that it was "not until Sam knocked over the tower that I woke up to nuclear power... [that was] true for a lot of people."[68] According to the New York Times, "Sam Lovejoy's act has made him somewhat of a celebrity among many of the young people in the communes sprouting up

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[65] Greenfield Recorder, March 19, 1974.

[66] Interview with Sam Lovejoy, May 24, 2003.

[67] Interview with Frances Crowe, April 24, 1996.

[68] Telephone interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

here along the Connecticut River Valley and in nearby college and university towns."[69] The New York Times also noted, however, "It has elicited a certain queasiness among ecology groups opposing the nuclear plant, who quickly disowned his deed."[70]

Lovejoy was pleased to learn his militancy resonated with much of the area's political left and counterculture. In a piece entitled "Tower Toppler Tells Why" for the Valley Advocate, Lovejoy explicitly described his action as an effort to bridge the 1960s and 1970s: "This is the beginning of a re-awakening. What's really happening is that the radicals of the late 60s and 70s split to the country, to their own lives in search of a spirituality. We have now established a community base after being inward for a couple of years and are moving out again."[71] Lovejoy described his act as intended to spark a movement, not stop the reactor in one fell swoop, comparing the coming antinuclear movement to the antiwar movement: "... that's not the point of radical action. When noone else was against the Vietnam War, radicals were saying it was absurd and were being called treasonous. But only several years later, these radicals were vindicated and the vast majority of Americans, I do believe, feel now that the war was bad... Now the revolution has turned inward. Just as America attacked North Vietnam, I think Northeast Utilities is attacking Montague."[72] According to Lovejoy, the fight over nuclear power was "... just like Vietnam, man, cause this is war. This is exactly like war in every way. The people who made the war made the nukes. The people who think in those Vietnam War 'Dominos Theory' terms are the people who build the nukes. It's a booger

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[69] New York Times, March 1, 1974.

[70] *Ibid.*

[71] "Tower Toppler Tells Why", Valley Advocate, March 20, 1974.

[72] *Ibid.*

psychology. It's an imperialist psychology. It's a capitalist psychology. It's a profit making, greedy, unplanned, sick psychology."[73] If Lovejoy cast Northeast Utilities as the "imperialist" U.S. military, he conferred upon himself the part of the underdog Viet Cong fighting off the foreign invaders: "So, you know, the Viet Cong, well I keep making that comparison 'cause I keep making the war analogy, but you know, anytime you're engaged in something, yes, you want the grass roots to get developed."[74] Lovejoy also articulated his philosophy in terms of a non-orthodox Marxism that was rooted in the 1960s New Left: "I don't dig the authoritarianism of communism, but I sure as hell dig the truism, the truth that's in communism, and it's a very simple theory. Economics doesn't take care of itself."[75] Elaborating on his political philosophy, Lovejoy added, "... I am a commune-ist. I'm not a Russian authoritarian communist, but I definitely believe that people got to share their shit. Because that's the only way [human] life's gonna survive."[76]

Lovejoy's colorful countercultural language might have resonated with much of the region's youth, but it also lent itself to those who sought to marginalize both Lovejoy and his action. The New York Times treatment of Lovejoy's sabotage offered a somewhat bemused look at the activist, making liberal use of his colorful quotes and stringing them together in a way that marginalized both Lovejoy and his concerns. At one point in the New York Times piece, the reporter wrote: "Mr. Lovejoy's plethora of objections to the nuclear power plant – including what he described as 'the safety rap',

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[73] The Saboteur, 93.

[74] *Ibid.*, 96.

[75] *Ibid.*, 95.

[76] *Ibid.*, 55.

'the background radiation and eco-system rap' and the 'whole Madison Avenue dance' – led him to conclude that 'it was tower-tippin' time.'"[77]

But Lovejoy's countercultural rhetoric masked an abiding commitment to the American political tradition. Unlike Lovejoy's interviews, replete with counter cultural slang, his prepared statement was carefully thought out and written in straightforward prose. He dated his statement, "George Washington's Birthday" and quoted extensively from the Declaration of Independence as well as the Massachusetts Bill of Rights. Lovejoy's statement began:

> In the long-established tradition of challenging the constitutionality of particular events, I readily admit full responsibility for sabotaging that outrageous symbol of a future nuclear plant, the N.U. meteorological tower on the Montague Plains. The Declaration of Independence rightfully legislates action "... whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends... of safety and happiness.' The Massachusetts Bill of Rights further states "... The people alone have an incontestable unalienable, and indefeasible right to institute government; and to reform, alter or totally change the same, when their protection, safety, prosperity and happiness require it." With the obvious danger of a nuclear power plant, with the biological finality of atomic radiation (and other equally ominous problems) a clear duty was mine to secure for my community the welfare and safety that the government has not only refused to provide, but has conspired to destroy.[78]

Denouncing "the despotism" of "elements of government" and "the nuclear energy industry", Lovejoy quoted another section of the Massachusetts Bill of Rights which read, "No man nor corporation, or association of men have any other title to obtain advantages, or particular and exclusive privileged, distinct from those of the community."[79] Lovejoy added, "While my purpose is not to provoke fear, I believe we

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[77] New York Times, March 1, 1974.

[78] "Statement Tells Why Tower Was Wrecked", Greenfield Recorder, February 22, 1974, 5.

[79] *Ibid.*

must act; positive action is the only option left open to us. Communities have the same rights as individuals. We must seize back control of our communities."[80] In another image from American history, Lovejoy wrote: "Mr. Charles Bragg [Vice President of N.U.] also compared the development of nuclear power plants to the western extension of the railroads. The only possible extension of his logic is to remember the liquidation of the American Indian, and thus realize the ominous repercussions for our own fragile little community."[81]

In his book, Working Class Americanism, historian Gary Gerstle describes traditionalist and nationalist elements of Americanism that have lent themselves to the political values of conservatives, but also a progressive element that holds up symbols of American radicalism and egalitarianism and was embraced by elements of the Old Left ("Communism is 20th century Americanism".)[82] Much of the New Left also embraced Progressive Americanism in the 1960s. Beyond the civil rights movement's use of such imagery – especially notable in the speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr. – many radicals, often seen as anti-American flag-burners, also used symbols of America's revolutionary past. Yippie activist Jerry Rubin appeared before HUAC dressed in the clothing of a revolutionary era minuteman, and antiwar radicals often spoke of Ho Chi Minh as "the George Washington of Vietnam". The countercultural film, Easy Rider featured two hippies, "Captain America" (Peter Fonda) and "Billy the Kid" (Dennis Hopper) who embodied America's true spirit of freedom (throughout the film Captain America wears

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[80] *Ibid.*

[81] *Ibid.*

[82] Gary Gerstle, Working Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

a jacket with a U.S. flag sewn to the back). Lovejoy carried on the New Left and counterculture's brand of Americanism in what might be described as a type of alternative or "counterpatriotism". Linking the New Left and the progressive tradition of Americanism, Lovejoy, as noted, referred to himself often as "a Viet Cong, an American revolutionary". He also chose George Washington's birthday, with its obvious allusions to Washington's mythical chopping down of the cherry tree, to topple the weather tower at the nuclear construction site. The New York Times article stated, "... Mr. Lovejoy... said he had selected George Washington's Birthday for 'symbolic reasons.'"[83] "I'm sure George is up there in heaven," Lovejoy said, "smiling down and saying 'That's solid.'"[84]

Lovejoy's statement repeatedly returned to the theme of democracy and local community control, both of which he believed were being trampled upon by larger outside powers. He accused the nuclear industry of "preying on the weakness of the local citizenry", choosing economically depressed communities to locate their plants, using tax-cuts as "bribes" in what ultimately constituted "social blackmail".[85] Lovejoy wrote, "When even the most learned physicists in the country continue to disagree... the citizens of the town were supposed to make a definitive judgment in a very few months on an issue that would radically alter their lives forever..."[86] He continued, "The nuclear industry and its support elements in government are practicing actively a form of despotism. They have selected the less populated rural countryside to answer the energy needs of the cities... are we witnessing a corrupt balance between population and

[83] New York Times, March 1, 1974

[84] *Ibid.*

[85] "Statement Tells Why Tower Was Wrecked", Greenfield Recorder, February 22,1974, 5

[86] *Ibid.*

risk?"[87] Noting the reluctance of private insurers to underwrite nuclear power plants, Lovejoy added, "The issue that faces us is even more horrible than murder, for here we speak not of one but an exponential number of grotesque deaths and mutilations. Herbert S. Denenberg, insurance commissioner of Pennsylvania, states, 'It may be that no one but God could write the insurance policy we need on nuclear reactors.'"[88]

Beyond the democratic issues, Lovejoy focused on the specific dangers of nuclear energy. By February 1974, the public had become aware of the numerous problems at the Yankee Rowe plant, just 30 miles north of Montague, and the frequent plant shutdowns necessitated by those problems. Evoking Rowe and concerns of nuclear meltdown, Lovejoy wrote, "It was announced only recently (after much research, and then and only then admitted officially) that the relatively old Rowe nuclear reactor had not been the impeccably safe place it has been eagerly billed by the avaricious power companies; indeed, the plant had no emergency core cooling system [ECCS] at all until 1972! The ECCS is a rather simple water cooling idea much like a car – except it is supposed to control temperatures comparable to our sun!"[89] On his concerns of the possible impact of low level radiation, Lovejoy declared, "I have been living here in Montague going on five years now, and in the valley for another five. As a farmer concerned about the organic and the natural, I find irradiated fruit, vegetables and meat to be inorganic; and I can find no natural balance with a nuclear plant in this or any other community."[90]

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[87] *Ibid.*

[88] *Ibid.*

[89] *Ibid.*

[90] *Ibid.*

The scientific community was indeed divided on the relative dangers of nuclear energy. Although many nuclear physicists extolled the safety and efficiency of nuclear power, a number of prominent physicists had expressed alarm at the dangers of nuclear energy and the dramatic increase of nuclear generators going on line. Noting these divisions within the scientific community, Lovejoy, toward the end of his statement wrote:

> In a society only beginning to explore the philosophical implications of abortion, euthanasia, and genetic manipulation, do we citizens allow the disunited and unconfident scientists to plop down heaps of high and low radioactivity in our midst? We truly have not delved into all the repercussions of our actions, yet we seek to proliferate the construction of obviously lethal experiments in increasing numbers of backyards.[91]

Finally, Lovejoy's statement addressed the issue that largely spawned the dramatic rise of nuclear plant building in the 1970s, the ongoing energy crisis. Criticizing a corporate-dominated society guided by the imperative of growing public consumption, Lovejoy wrote:

> The energy crisis, so-called, is an obvious signal for the need for immediate and nationwide introspection and re-evaluation. We must give up those false and selfish notions of individual freedom where they impinge on the freedoms necessary for a wholesome and balanced community life. We must bring to an end the greed of the corporate state. We must see that profit, as the *modus operandi* of our society, is defunct.[92]

Linking together the various themes in Lovejoy's statement was a line of argument that would form the basis of his necessity defense at trial. Lovejoy argued that the principles of community democracy had been traduced by the powerful nuclear industry. The government had become, in his view, an active conspirator with the

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[91] *Ibid.*

[92] *Ibid.*

nuclear industry in usurping the community's democratic rights. Given this, and the potential dangers of the twin nuclear reactors, Lovejoy argued, he had no choice but to violate the law to protest what he believed to be a greater evil. His thinking was very much informed by the philosophy of non-violent civil disobedience that had formed the core of the civil rights movement in the first half of the 1960s. Lovejoy's intention of putting the nuclear industry on trial is outlined in the final paragraphs of his statement:

> We must remove the dangerous and sensitive issue of nuclear plant development from economic and political arenas, and put the issue to a more prudent and judicious test. One of man's highest achievements is the principle and right of trial by jury. In any trial, indeed only one juror need voice skepticism to create a hung jury and a mistrial... It is my firm conviction that if a jury of 12 impartial scientists were empanelled, and following normal legal procedure they were given all pertinent data and arguments; then this jury would never give a unanimous vote for deployment of nuclear reactors amongst the civilian population. Rather, I believe they would call for the complete shutdown of all commercially operated nuclear plants.[93]

Lovejoy ended his statement, "Love and affection to all my fellow citizens."[94]

His act of sabotage had dramatically elevated the issue of nuclear energy in western Massachusetts. When his case went to court, he would seek to put nuclear energy on trial. His defense would hinge on convincing a jury of his peers that his law breaking was necessitated by the greater danger to the community posed by the nuclear reactors.

The Trial of Samuel Holden Lovejoy

The movement against nuclear energy grew dramatically in the Pioneer Valley during the months between Lovejoy's arrest and his trial. The high profile of Lovejoy's

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[93] *Ibid.*

[94] *Ibid.*

upcoming trial proved to be an invaluable tool for the movement. An antinuclear group calling itself the Alternative Energy Coalition ("AEC" in a parody of the Atomic Energy Commission) fanned out across the Valley, securing enough signatures – 3,800 --to put a non-binding referendum question on the November ballot asking residents of Hamden, Hampshire and Berkshire counties to vote on whether or not construction of the Montague twin nuclear reactors should be stopped.[95] Members of the Montague Farm were the driving force behind organizing the AEC, which started with twenty members and grew to over a hundred in a few months, spanning Franklin, Hampshire, Berkshire and Hamden counties.[96] Randy Kehler, who joined the AEC, recalls that it was Harvey Wasserman who came up with the name "to whimsically confuse people".[97] Wasserman, Anna Gyorgy and Lovejoy, along with others in the AEC, disseminated the group's views in publications entitled AEC News and The Montague Muse. The background of many of the commune's members in the LNS played an important role in making the Montague activists some of the most visible and articulate spokespeople for the antinuclear cause throughout the 1970s. The first issue of the Montague Muse included an editorial by Lovejoy, which showed that the group's early focus was on reaching members of the area's counterculture:

> The tower ecotage episode was a catalyst for awareness and action. But it also surfaced an inevitable social collision between the progressive-enlightened and the stagnant forces in Franklin County, in the United States, and the world. The background, lifestyle, the entire mindset of myself, and countless other brothers and sisters, see the locally proposed nuke as the cute microcosmic symbol for an enormous political-social

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[95] Official copies of the referendum questions are located in Box 7, Folder 93, IBEW.

[96] Montague Muse, No. 1, Summer 1974. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collections.

[97] Telephone interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

> system so corrupt and so in need of change [that we should all thank] Northeast Utilities for its focusing efforts in this regard.[98]

Early on, the AEC encountered skepticism about its referendum strategy. In response, AEC member Robert Strachota sought to make the case for the efficacy of the referendum campaign in a letter that circulated among activists in the three county area:

> Some people have questioned the probable impact of this referendum. If we are able to get a healthy negative vote about the plants, the referendum will be effective in any one of several ways. First, we could force NU to reconsider their plans by the vote itself. Secondly, a referendum vote means that the Senator from this district must work against the plants... Thirdly, the national media are ready and waiting to cover our campaign and this means both national education and additional pressure on NU... To pull this off is going to take a big effort. NU is going to spend a lot of money to beat us. We can't match their glossy brochures and media campaign... But we can do something they cannot. We can meet people person to person.[99]

The campaign got off to a good start in the spring of 1974, as the antinuclear movement scored important victories when town meetings in three communities voted for a moratorium on construction of the twin plants. In May, the town of Wendell became the first western Massachusetts community to vote for a moratorium on the construction of the Montague reactors. The towns of Leverett and Shutesbury soon followed suit.[100] NU Public Information officer Bill Semanie attempted to play down the growing opposition to nuclear energy by sounding a theme that would become more common as debate over nuclear power heated up in western Massachusetts: opposition to the plants came from elements of academia and the counterculture, both of which were outside the mainstream of American life. Semanie declared, "We'd frankly be

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[98] Montague Muse, No. 1, Summer 1974. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collections.

[99] "Dear Friend", an AEC Letter by Robert Strachota, August 28, 1974. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collections.

[100] Greenfield Recorder, May 13, 1974; Amherst Record, May 19, 1974; Springfield Union, May 18, 1974.

surprised if these particular communities voted against the moratoriums – they are heavily loaded now with people from the academic world around Amherst."[101] Ironically, at a town meeting in the area's bastion of liberalism, the town of Amherst narrowly voted down a moratorium on the Montague reactors. However, as debate progressed over the coming months, Amherst, home to Hampshire College, Amherst College and the University of Massachusetts' flagship campus, would become a stronghold of the antinuclear movement.[102] The campaign gathered steam in the fall as returning students enlisted in the campaign, especially student environmental groups such as MASSPIRG.

The Montague Farm became the base for both the referendum campaign and organizing for Lovejoy's fall trial. Frances Crowe, longtime Northampton resident and Quaker antiwar aetivist, recalls sitting on bales of hay in a barn with those the conventionally dressed, 54-year old activist later described as "alternative type people" and "vegetarians".[103] Although there were many cultural differences between the old guard religious pacifists whom Crowe represented and the new radicals of the hippie communes, there was a broad overlap between their philosophies and commitment to non-violence. Preparing for his defense, Lovejoy was intent on putting NU, the Atomie Energy Commission and nuclear energy itself on trial. Furthermore, Lovejoy was determined to represent himself at the trial and spent days scouring law books and meeting with Judge Kent Smith, who urged Lovejoy to retain council but was impressed

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[101] Springfield Union, May 18, 1974.

[102] Undated newspaper clipping, Box 7, Folder 95, IBEW.

[103] Interview with Frances Crowe, April 24, 1996.

with Lovejoy's ability to learn the law and prepare a defense.[104] Lovejoy succeeded in getting two high profile witnesses to testify on his behalf during the trial. University of California professor and former Manhattan Project scientist, John Gofman, whose book on nuclear energy, Poisoned Power had become an important source of information for many in the growing antinuclear movement, was the most important witness. In his work, Gofman drew attention to the under-reported problems that had plagued the nuclear industry over the years: the dangers of low-level radiation; the underestimated potential for a reactor core meltdown; the threat to future generations of spent radiation that would need to be buried and would remain radioactive for over 100,000 years; and the undemocratic decision making processes of the Atomic Energy Commission.[105] Lovejoy's other star witness was radical activist-historian Howard Zinn of Boston University. A veteran of the movement against the Vietnam War, Zinn's role at the trial was to review the history of civil disobedience in America and place Lovejoy's action in the tradition of Henry David Thoreau, nineteenth century abolitionism, the women's suffrage movement, the labor movement, and more recently the civil rights and antiwar movements. Together, the scientist's and the historian's testimony sought to make the case for a "necessity defense." They would claim Lovejoy had no meaningful recourse through legal channels and his crime was committed in an effort to prevent a more egregious crime.[106]

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[104] Greenfield Recorder, September 10, 1974, 4. Although Judge Smith failed to dissuade Lovejoy from representing himself, he did prevail upon him to retain council for when Lovejoy himself took the stand. Wasserman, 22.

[105] John Gofman, Poisoned Power: The Case Against Nuclear Power Plants (Emmaus, P.A.: Rodale Press, 1971).

[106] Lovejoy's Nuclear War.

The trial began on September 17, 1974 at the Franklin County Superior Court in Greenfield. The trial electrified the Pioneer Valley, garnering a great deal of local publicity, and once again earning coverage by the New York Times. Indeed, the trial became a major spectacle. The courtroom was packed with Lovejoy supporters and, as hoped, had a very politicized atmosphere. Presiding Judge Kent Smith stated, "This is one of the strangest trials ever held in Franklin County."[107] Leading the prosecution was District Attorney John Murphy. The prosecution's case was simple: Lovejoy had intentionally destroyed the weather tower, causing over $14,000 in damage, and had confessed to the crime. Dismissing civil disobedience as an arbitrary and unacceptable form of opposing nuclear energy, Murphy argued Lovejoy's personal motivations were immaterial.[108] After the prosecution presented its straightforward case, the defense began to lay the groundwork for its "necessity defense" argument. On the witness stand, Lovejoy began by telling the story of his life, emphasizing his deep ties to the region. Turning to his destruction of the tower, Lovejoy declared that he felt he had no choice since legal channels were in affect blind alleys. Lovejoy argued that the Atomic Energy Commission's public hearings, where "interveners" could make their case against a proposed nuclear power plant, were a sham. Noting the AEC's dubious role as both promoter of nuclear energy and regulator of the nuclear industry, Lovejoy called the commission "a kangaroo court… a panel that acts as promoter and regulator, judge, jury

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[107] *Ibid.*

[108] Wasserman, 27-38.

and thief all rolled into one."[109] Lovejoy said, "There is no [meaningful, legal] recourse… We do have recourse, but not through established means."[110]

Lovejoy made the by then familiar arguments against nuclear energy before personalizing his decision to topple the tower. He described agonizing over his decision and his doubts about himself. He described wondering who he was to take upon himself such a major decision on behalf of others? Lovejoy stated, "The existence of Sam Lovejoy means nothing compared to future generations… and all those people who are gonna be hung under a cloud, a dismal cloud."[111] Lovejoy's attorney then asked, "Was there were one single thing personally or in writing, that influenced you the most in your decision to topple the tower?" In some of his most moving testimony, Lovejoy answered, "Yes… A little girl named Sequoia… it was impossible for me to not tip over that tower and live in a house with two young children who had no control over their own lives."[112]

The defense then called its first witness on Lovejoy's behalf, John Gofman. Given the unusual nature of the defense witnesses' testimony, Judge Smith decided to withhold the subsequent testimony from the jury. Gofman began by stating that he felt "a moral and social obligation" to testify on Lovejoy's behalf. Gofman reiterated many of the arguments against nuclear energy from his book. He also sought to re-enforce the "necessity defense" argument by arguing that the nuclear industry was in affect involved

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[109] *Ibid*

[110] Lovejoy's Nuclear War

[111] *Ibid.*

[112] *Ibid.*

in a "conspiracy" to promote nuclear power through a concerted media campaign while effectively limiting public debate through their power over the corporate media.[113]

After Gofman's technical testimony as to the health and environmental risks of nuclear energy, Howard Zinn took the witness stand. He reviewed the tradition of civil disobedience in American history and argued that Lovejoy's action fell well within that tradition. Zinn argued that laws were often made by people representing special interests, especially corporate interests, and that, often, more harm was done by those who obeyed unjust laws than by those who broke them, an allusion to the "Nuremberg Defense." Zinn described the history of corporations running roughshod over local communities and people. He described a hundred years of almost unchecked pollution and the numerous industrial accidents that only began to be curtailed with the emergence of the organized labor movement, which had also engaged in tactics of civil disobedience. Whereas Lovejoy had invoked children and the future to justify his actions, Zinn argued that Lovejoy also acted on behalf of those generations in the past that had suffered at the hands of the powerful but had been unable to do anything about it.[114] After the trial, Zinn stated:

> If my trial testimony had an essence… it was the necessity of civil disobedience in times of danger to life and liberty and health and how historically in the United States we've seen many, many times how the… institutions of government are really very inadequate in protecting us, as we've seen from the number of wars we've engaged in, the number of people who've been killed in industrial accidents, the number of people exploited by corporations… [F]rom time to time, when grievances have become too deep, groups of people had to break outside the machinery of government, had to break the law [and] commit civil disobedience.[115]

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[113] *Ibid.* Also, Wasserman, 27-38.

[114] *Ibid.*

[115] *Ibid.*

A librarian from Gill, Massachusetts, Betty Bell appeared as a character witness for Lovejoy. An older woman who dressed conventionally, Bell described herself as having been opposed to nuclear energy, but feeling uncomfortable with civil disobedience. Bell spoke highly of Lovejoy as a person, and described how his sabotage of the tower and the subsequent publicity around the case had led her to reconsider her views on civil disobedience. Now, according to Bell, she viewed Lovejoy's destruction of the tower as in the spirit of the Boston Tea Party, Shay's Rebellion and Rosa Parks refusal to move to the back of the bus. She also told the court that in her view, Lovejoy's action bought the community time to reconsider something that would have repercussions for generations to come. In an interview after the trial, Bell stated, "If the tower were toppled, it would give us a year to think it over, to learn, to educate ourselves, you know, have our eyes open to what the dangers were."[116] Bell went on to become a committed antinuclear and environmental activist and was a crucial bridge between the countercultural activists and mainstream members of the community. The antinuclear activists centered on the Montague Farm brought a wealth of activist experience from the 1960s, including community organizing. Several were veterans of the civil rights movement, like Vince O'Connor, who had done community work with SNCC and Randy Kehler, who had been active with CORE. O'Connor said of Betty Bell, "Well, you're the librarian for a little town, you know everybody and everybody knows you, and when you come out and say this nuclear power thing doesn't sound like

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[116] *Ibid.*

a good idea to me and are willing to do things with a bunch of hippies, that becomes the most dangerous combination. They got farmers involved."[117]

In the end, however, it was not the defense's arguments but a technicality that led to Lovejoy's acquittal. In order to discredit NU, the prosecution and the police, Lovejoy brought in Montague tax assessor Robert Sulda, who said that the weather tower had been assessed as "real property" and not "personal property".[118] Whereas the destruction of "personal" property was a felony, destruction of "real" property was a misdemeanor. Judge Kent Smith then ordered the case thrown out on the grounds that Lovejoy had been charged with the wrong crime. Although many of Lovejoy's supporters were euphoric, Lovejoy was not. He pleaded with Judge Smith to allow his case to be sent to a jury, his objective all along. Smith refused. Judge Smith seemed relieved to find a way to dispense with the case. In the most politicized local trial in recent history, he found himself buffeted by countervailing pressures. Established business and labor interests, especially the giant NU, and much of the area's more conservative residents wanted a conviction. The Pioneer Valley, meanwhile, was aflame with antinuclear activism and the case had nationwide as well as regional significance. Smith had a reputation as a liberal judge, and Lovejoy later speculated that this might have influenced his decision. Lovejoy also believed that the defense's arguments were beginning to resonate with the liberal judge. Zinn attributed the judge's decision to the "moral pressure" put on him and the politicized atmosphere in the court.[119] Whatever the personal reasons, Judge Smith

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[117] Interview with Vincent O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

[118] Valley Advocate, October 2, 1974, 3.

[119] Lovejoy's Nuclear War. Also, Wasserman, 27-38.

tossed the case out and Lovejoy walked out of court a free man. Once again, Lovejoy had mixed feelings about what he regarded as a partial victory. Just as he had failed to topple the entire weather tower, he won his case but not by a jury verdict. From the beginning, he had hoped that a jury verdict on his behalf would symbolize an indictment of the nuclear industry and put the industry on the defensive both locally and nationally.

Despite the somewhat anti-climactic end to a highly charged case, Lovejoy and his supporters had a great deal to celebrate. After the trial, several jurors stated that the jury was leaning toward acquittal. Such a decision would have been based almost exclusively on Lovejoy's personal testimony since Judge Smith withheld Gofman and Zinn's testimony from the jury. Lovejoy's supporters felt confident the jury was leaning toward a not guilty verdict. According to Frances Crowe, "Everyone knew he would have been found not guilty."[120] Apparently, Lovejoy's demeanor at the trial, his emphasis on the community and future generations, and his willingness to risk a long jail term resonated most with at least some jurors. Shortly after the trial, one juror, James O'Neill, told a documentary film crew that the jury was inclined to acquit because the "Commonwealth didn't prove the point that he [Lovejoy] was malicious when he did it."[121] O'Neill continued:

> That's the reason why I think the jury would have acquitted him... I don't think he was malicious. I don't think he's that kind of man. He figured he would sacrifice his own life... for the existence of the community in this area. In other words he was going to be the sacrificial lamb. He didn't care what happened to him. All he cared about was just the community at large, the generations and generations to come.[122]

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[120] Interview with Frances Crowe, April 24, 1996.

[121] Lovejoy's Nuclear War.

[122] *Ibid.*

On Judge Smith's decision to dismiss the case, O'Neill stated, "I was really glad he did what he did."[123]

The trial of Sam Lovejoy not only energized the antinuclear movement of western Massachusetts, it worked as a springboard for local activists to address a national audience. A film cooperative based at the Montague Farm called Green Mountain Post Films made a documentary of Lovejoy's sabotage and trial entitled Lovejoy's Nuclear War. The documentary began with a 1946 quote by Albert Einstein, in which the physicist states, "To the village square we must carry the facts of atomic energy. From there must come America's voice."[124] The film gave a short background on the history of nuclear power from President Dwight Eisenhower's "Atom's for Peace" program through President Richard Nixon's pro-nuclear "Project Independence" speech of November 7, 1973, where Nixon proposed reducing plant start up time from ten to six years. The documentary then reviewed the recent history of the proposed Montague reactors and the life of Sam Lovejoy.[125]

The film focused primarily on the trial and included numerous interviews with John Gofman, Howard Zinn and Lovejoy. Standing against the backdrop of the Connecticut River, Lovejoy says, "I had to hunt around for some recourse, some way I could stop this disaster from occurring in my area, and maybe stop it around the country or even the world."[126] Although the documentary is openly sympathetic to Lovejoy, it

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[123] *Ibid.*

[124] *Ibid.*

[125] *Ibid.*

[126] *Ibid.*

does seek to maintain a semblance of balance by giving a good deal of time to those who favor nuclear energy. There were several extended interviews with NU Vice President Charles Bragg, as well as local residents who favored nuclear energy. What emerges, perhaps unintentionally, was the degree to which the debate over nuclear energy in western Massachusetts was being defined in cultural terms. The film showed short snippets of local residents who express anger at Lovejoy for standing in the way of progress and especially for breaking the law and destroying private property. Many of the Pioneer Valley's more traditional residents, it becomes apparent, saw Lovejoy's sabotage as a terrorist act more reminiscent of the SLA and Weather Underground than of Martin Luther King or the Mahatma Gandhi. Lovejoy responded, "I found out how hung up, literally, people are on property… They tend to protect property more, in many ways, than they are willing to protect liberty, sometimes more than they are willing to protect life."[127]

NU Vice President Charles Bragg repeatedly sounded the cultural themes that permeated so much of the debate over nuclear energy, portraying those opposed to nuclear energy as an extremist fringe. Arguing that one must take into account not only someone's arguments but their background, Bragg stated, "You try to weed out those who are perhaps anti-technology… They'd be as much against an electric toothbrush, if you will, as against nuclear power plants. It's a lifestyle with them. You have, I think, to take their opinions in context [and weigh that against] the background of science and western civilization."[128]

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[127] *Ibid.*

[128] *Ibid.*

A good portion of the documentary centered on the question of civil disobedience. Lovejoy and Zinn spent a good deal of time discussing the philosophy and history of civil disobedience. In reply, Charles Bragg dismissed civil disobedience as a formula for anarchy in which a self-anointed minority can run roughshod over the will of the majority as expressed through the democratic process. Bragg made the case that civil disobedience could be used by the right as well as the left and ultimately was coercive and undemocratic. The NU vice president argued that perhaps civil disobedience is acceptable when used by a Gandhi, but not by a Hitler. Others, such as the librarian Betty Bell described how Lovejoy's act had forced them to re-evaluate their views and see civil disobedience in a new light. Among the latter, was Betty Bell's husband, Constable for the town of Gill, Stanley Bell who states, "[The Montague nuclear plant] was not just detrimental to Sam, but to all mankind. I had a completely different view of civil disobedience after the trial."[129]

Toward the end of the documentary, Lovejoy articulates a view of politics that reflects the huge debt his philosophy owed to 1960s New Left radicalism:

> When you take a concrete position, that's politics. When you take a social position and start to develop yourself as a social creature, that's when you get political. You're not a lobbyist anymore. You're not taking little negotiating stands. You're saying 'no'.[130]

Lovejoy's Nuclear War became a powerful organizing tool for the antinuclear movement in the 1970s. It was screened for antinuclear groups and at independent film festivals. The film made its way overseas in 1975, when film producers Daniel Keller and Charles Light approached Randy Kehler, about to travel to Europe for an

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[129] *Ibid.*

[130] *Ibid.*

international War Resisters Conference, and asked if he'd screen Lovejoy's Nuclear War for antinuclear groups overseas. Kehler and his companion Betsy Corner found themselves at the massive 25,000 person antinuclear occupation at Wyhl, West Germany. According to Kehler, "tons of people came out" to see it as the film was "simultaneously translated". Kehler and Corner also showed the film in Freiburg, Bonn and several other West German locations to enthusiastic crowds.[131] In 1976, Sam Lovejoy and Anna Gyorgy took the film on a west coast tour to promote the antinuclear referendum.[132]

Although Lovejoy's trial would become known both nationally and internationally, its immediate impact was felt most intensely in western Massachusetts. Lovejoy's trial ended in late September 1974. Within weeks, residents of Hamden, Hampshire and Berkshire counties would head to the polls to vote on whether to halt the construction of the Montague nuclear power plant and on whether to dismantle existing nuclear plants in Vernon, Vermont and Rowe, Massachusetts.

Counterattack:Labor, NU and the November Nuclear Power Referenda

During the months leading up to Lovejoy's trial, the Alternative Energy Coalition fanned out across the Pioneer Valley and collected 3,800 signatures to put the question of nuclear energy on the November ballot in three western Massachusetts counties. Hamden, Hampshire and Berkshire counties comprised the state senatorial district then held by Democrat John Olver. The first of the two non-binding referenda

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[131] Telephone interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

[132] "Anna's Report from California", AEC News, April 1976. Frances Crowe Collection, Sophia Smith Special Collections.

read: "Shall the state senator from this district be instructed to oppose the building of nuclear power plants in Montague, Massachusetts?" The second question asked voters: "Shall the state senator for this district be instructed to sponsor and support a resolution calling for the closing and dismantling of nuclear power plants in Rowe, Massachusetts and Vernon, Vermont?"[133]

As Lovejoy's trial approached, the ballot questions became the battle ground in an intense debate that involved over 40 towns in the three county-area. The regional battle over nuclear energy was watched closely by both the national nuclear industry and organized labor, both of which saw the referenda as a worrisome challenge to nuclear power with national implications.

As the energy crisis and high unemployment took its toll on American workers, many unions, especially those in the construction trades, saw nuclear energy as a potential source of jobs for besieged workers. Although nuclear power plants, once operational, employed only 200-300 skilled technicians, the construction of these plants, lasting around four years, employed between 2,000-3,000 workers. NU estimated that at its peak, construction of the Montague twin reactors would employ 2,450 workers, including 100 boilermakers, 350 electricians, 200 iron workers, 300 pipe fitters, 150 welders, 250 carpenters, 50 asbestos workers 50 operating engineers, 60 bricklayers and cement finishers, as well as 300 general laborers.[134] In the face of high unemployment both nationally and regionally, residents could not easily dismiss the prospect of over 2,400 jobs that would benefit not only workers and their families but local businesses as

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[133] Wasserman 38. Also, official copies of the referenda are located in Box 7, Folder 93, IBEW.

[134] Charles Bragg to J.Z. Souvenie, "Manpower Estimates", Box 7, Folder 97, IBEW.

well. For organized labor, the Montague plants represented a needed shot in the arm in a recession-plagued economy.

Both locally and nationally, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) spearheaded labor's campaign on behalf of nuclear energy. In western Massachusetts, the point man in labor's pronuclear campaign was a former electrician and Navy veteran, George O'Brien. O'Brien had worked his way up the labor movement from a journeyman electrician in search of steady work to business manager for IBEW Local 34, president of the Northampton, Massachusetts Labor Council and President of the Berkshire-Hampshire Building Trades Council. A tough Irish-American with a bawdy sense of humor, O'Brien stated, "I was a Democrat since I was born."[135] An old-style, lunchbox labor liberal, O'Brien had little patience for the new environmentalist, civil rights, antiwar and feminist activists who streamed into the Democratic Party in the 1970s.

"When Sam Lovejoy was kicking up his heels and knocked the tower down," recalled O'Brien years later, it "upset me to no end. I was concerned with workers, with people."[136] For O'Brien, the unemployment of the 1970s was "heartbreaking": "I always felt bad for the poor guy that wasn't working... When I ran that outfit [IBEW 34]... I knew each man by his first name. I knew his wife by her first name. I knew how many kids he had and some of them by their first names."[137] Seeing some of his

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[135] Interview with George O'Brien, April 27, 1996.

[136] *Ibid.*

[137] *Ibid.*

members going through divorces that he attributed to the "frictions" of unemployment, O'Brien "called up anywhere and everywhere to get my men work."[138]

The November nuclear energy referenda thus quickly became a struggle between two grass roots movements. Organizing in college classrooms, peace churches and barns at local communes were the advocates of a nuclear moratorium; from the union halls came the moratorium opponents. Both sides spread out across the Pioneer Valley in search of supporters. O'Brien recalled, "We did what we did best: leafleting. Going door to door."[139] Often enlisting the help of their children, union members, according to one estimate, reached over 20,000 homes.[140] Especially active in opposing the Alternative Energy Coalition's campaign was the newly formed IBEW Nuclear Committee, which distributed thousands of pamphlets, some of which urged residents to "Vote NO!" on the moratorium. The committee argued the Montague plants "will not release harmful amounts of radiation. They will be built and operated with the most rigid safety requirements of any technology ever developed. They will provide needed electricity, far cheaper than any available alternatives. They will provide jobs for the construction crafts and material suppliers in this area." Another flier exhorted, "Vote NO on question #11: Otherwise it could increase your electric bills, result in the loss of thousands of construction jobs, and cause the region to lose significant economic gains."[141]

Local colleges provided the forum for much of the debate over the referenda. Speaking of the antinuclear movement's popularity at the University of Massachusetts,

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[138] *Ibid.*

[139] *Ibid.*

[140] Hartford Times, December 23, 1974.

[141] IBEW Anti-Moratorium Pamphlets, Box 6, Folder 77, IBEW.

Amherst, O'Brien recalled, "They enlisted half the university."[142] At one university debate, organized by Massachusetts PIRG, O'Brien declared, "If this group [PIRG] is so concerned for your safety and mine, then I submit that the [question] to appear on the November 5th ballot should read as follows: 'Instruct the state senator from the Franklin-Hampshire district to do everything in his power to have the state legislature declare a ban on the use of all motor vehicles in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts."[143] Attempting to personalize the issue for the students, O'Brien asked, "What would the University of Massachusetts do with a 36% reduction in power? Half the students would have to attend classes one week and then go home for a week while the other half of the student body attend classes on the alternate week."[144]

Although the labor campaign had many of the hallmarks of a grassroots campaign, behind the scenes, representatives of the nuclear industry advised O'Brien. According to O'Brien, "NU embraced me."[145] At every stage of the debate two public relations men from NU, Montague Nuclear Project Officer Robert Barret and Public Information Manager Bill Semanie coached O'Brien, seeing in the labor leader a more

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[142] Interview with George O'Brien, April 27, 1996.

[143] Undated newspaper clipping, Box 6, Folder 82, IBEW.

[144] *Ibid.*

[145] Interview with George O'Brien, April 27, 1996. The 1974 western Massachusetts moratorium campaign became a model of a strategy the nuclear industry used with increasing effectiveness throughout the 1970s. By having organized labor out front as the public face of a pronuclear campaign while industry representatives orchestrated strategy behind the scenes, the nuclear industry was able to elicit far more public sympathy than would have been the case had corporate presidents and industry experts taken the lead. Union workers and their families effectively countered the antinuclear movement's grass roots image with one of their own. Furthermore, the confluence of interests between labor and capital allowed the nuclear industry to mobilize labor's vast human resources, energy and experience in waging public campaigns with the industry's own formidable financial resources. This strategy was most widely and effectively used in the 1976 nuclear referendum campaign in California. See Thomas R. Wellock, Critical Masses: Opposition to Nuclear Power In California, 1958-1978 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998).

human face for the nuclear industry. Barrett and Semanie sent O'Brien a constant stream of memos and articles. "They would fill me in. I wasn't the brainiest type, but I could read. We'd sit down with them [and] we'd take an anti-[nuclear] argument apart," recalled O'Brien.[146]

O'Brien professed to doing a lot of "soul searching" about his cooperation with NU since he was not "overly enthused to side with the nuclear industry."[147] The nuclear debate in western Massachusetts was a microcosm of a strange corporate-labor alliance that was being forged at the national level as the controversy over nuclear energy heated up in the mid-1970s. As a trade journal for General Electric gushed, "Organized labor has gone to bat for nuclear power." The journal approvingly quoted Paul Snoop, International Representative of the IBEW's Utility Operations Department, who stated, "Across the bargaining table the adversary style prevails. [But] at this time there is no table between us. Our friends need help."[148]

Both the nuclear industry and the national labor unions that stood to benefit from nuclear power took a keen interest in NU and O'Brien's fight against the antinuclear movement in western Massachusetts. IBEW's Paul Snoop wrote O'Brien, "Your

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[146] *Ibid.* Barrett and Semani, for the most part, allowed O'Brien to debate in his own inimitable style. An exception came in 1977 when a local television station asked O'Brien to participate in a series of televised debates on the Montague Nuclear Power Station. The station went to great lengths to advertise the upcoming debates. One promotion for the series stated: " The issue has broken the community into interest groups reminiscent of the Vietnam War era. Jobs are in high demand, and many labor unions have allied themselves with the utilities and other industries who see the plant as an example of economic progress for the region. Students, older progressives, members of the peace and ecology movements see the plant as a threat to life and nature." CCATV Promotional News Release, Box 6, Folder 77, IBEW. When Barrett and Semanie learned the station had invited some "heavy hitters" from New York to participate in the debates, they told O'Brien, "Stay the hell out of that." They were worried, recalled O'Brien, "that I'd get my ass handed to me" and that "I might embarrass the whole crowd." Interview with George O'Brien, April 27, 1996.

[147] *Ibid.*

[148] General Electric Newsletter. Fall 1975, Box 7, Folder 95, IBEW.

approach to the anti-nuclear groups is the correct one. The obstructionists have taken to the ballot and pose quite a serious threat to the nuclear industry. If they are successful locally (and they have a good chance of success), it will encourage them to seek a statewide moratorium on nuclear construction. Our efforts must be directed toward preventing this."[149] Charles Pillard, International President of the IBEW, wrote in the IBEW Journal, "Presently the industry is under great pressure from a small group of intelligent, articulate prophets of doom, who claim they, and only they, have the knowledge and capability to determine the direction of this nation... However, THEY DO NOT SPEAK FOR THE IBEW! ... In short, what they seek is to retard or halt progress, which stimulates economic growth... This is not doomsday! The IBEW will not knuckle under to intimidation by word or deed of obstructionists. We will support our God, our Nation, our Union!"[150]

NU and the IBEW's use of the term "obstructionist" to describe opponents of nuclear energy highlighted a fundamental division between environmentalists -- who spoke frequently of the need for Americans to reconsider unchecked consumption and advocated conservation -- and those who believed new technology held the key to unlimited economic growth and prosperity. At a debate held in an area high school, O'Brien sought to underscore this difference with a touch of humor: "I am amazed at the effort here to stop progress. Has anybody here ever stopped to think what would happen... if they scuttled Ford and the first automobile and we were still using the horse

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[149] Memo: Paul R. Snoop to George O'Brien, October 15, 1974, Box 7, Folder 93, IBEW.

[150] Memo: Charles H. Pillard, To: All International Officers, All Representatives, All Local Unions and Councils, *circa* Fall 1974, Box 7, Folder 93, IBEW.

and carriage? How could [we] ever get rid of all that horse shit?"[151] For advocates of nuclear energy, the new power source held the key to maintaining the economic growth and prosperity that had lifted much of the working class toward the ranks of the middle class in post-World War II America, but was now threatened by the energy crisis and stagflation. NU president Lelan Sillin warned of a "de-industrial revolution" that would impoverish working and middle class Americans.[152] Robert Murphy, Business Manager for Local 64 of the United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters, sounded a similar theme: "If these environmentalists and anti-nukes don't get their act together with the rest of the people here in New England, then the six New England states will become a national park."[153]

For the opponents of nuclear energy, many of whose views were informed by the anti-materialism of the counterculture, Americans had to come to reject a lifestyle that saw nature merely as a source of exploitation for maintaining a lifestyle based on ever expanding consumption. Speaking of the energy crisis and its impact on American workers, Sam Lovejoy declared, "So it's a short term riff. For the workers it's a burn. And so what the workers need is... constant construction projects and so therefore, constant development, right? Evermore, Evermore, Evermore... Well, then you start studying the electrical consumption of the country and how much juice this country

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[151] Interview with George O'Brien, April 27, 1996.

[152] Address by Lelan F. Sillin, Jr. to the Colony Club of Springfield, Massachusetts, February 26, 1975, Box 7, Folder 97, IBEW.

[153] Robert Murphy, quoted in George O'Brien draft speech, *circa* 1974, Box 6, Folder 80, IBEW.

consumes in comparison to other countries. And you realize this country really is the peak of gluttony and that we're just living this illusion..."[154]

Thus, the debate over nuclear energy increasingly became a battle between those who sought to maintain a lifestyle they knew and loved, and those who believed Americans must radically alter their thinking and way of life. Like the corporate representatives of the nuclear industry, O'Brien consistently accentuated the cultural chasms that had developed in the 1960s and persisted into the 1970s. But whereas the New Left and counterculture of the 1960s had represented a threat to traditional Americans' values, in the recession plagued 1970s many saw the left, and especially environmentalists, as a threat to their standard of living. O'Brien repeatedly invoked environmentalists' threat to the ultimate symbol of middle class life: the television. In one speech, O'Brien asked, "Has the thought ever occurred to you that we might have to ration electricity? Can you imagine unplugging the t.v. set? What a horrible thought!"[155] In another paean to the comforts of middle class life, O'Brien declared, "We can all agree that coming home after a hard day's work that there is nothing like a nice cold beer from the electric refrigerator, a refreshing hot shower, a good home cooked meal from the electric stove and whatever the season, a little heat or air conditioning when you sit to unwind with a good book or watch a little t.v."[156] Such appeals were meant not only to invoke fears of brown outs, but also to identify nuclear energy with Middle America,

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[154] The Saboteur, 60-1.

[155] George O'Brien, Draft Speech #1, Box 6, Folder 78, IBEW.

[156] George O'Brien, Draft Speech # 2, Box 6, Folder 78, IBEW.

as distinct from the hippies and radicals who posed a threat to Americans' standard of living and way of life.

Antinuclear activists, meanwhile, criticized their labor opponents as reactionary. In 1970, construction workers had attacked peaceful antiwar protesters in New York City in what became known as "the Hardhat Rebellion". From this grew the image of the "hardhat" that was embraced by conservative politicians and ridiculed by many liberals and radicals. This image was best portrayed in the 1970 film Joe and by the character Archie Bunker from television's All in the Family. Both "Joe" and "Archie" came to symbolize the putative narrow-mindedness and bigotry of the average blue-collar American.[157] Years later, activist Frances Crowe, speaking of labor, conceded that at the time the antinuclear movement just "wrote these people off."[158] Vince O'Connor, however, recalled that the movement went to great lengths to separate the technology and the industry from the workers: "We attacked the industry and not the people who worked in the plants .. attack the guys in the suits but not the workers in the plant."[159]

Nevertheless, as the debate over nuclear power intensified, O'Brien became increasingly

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[157] Joshua B. Freeman, "Hardhats, Construction Workers, Manliness and the 1970 Pro-War Demonstrations", Journal of Social History, Summer 1993, 725-44; David Halle, America's Working Man; Work, Home and Politics Among Blue Collar Property Owners (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Peter Carroll, "No One Calls It the Working Class" in It Seemed Like Nothing Happened: The Tragedy and Promise of America in the 1970s. In the 1970s, the "Tonight Show" with Johnny Carson also lampooned the image of the backwards blue-collar super-patriot with the host's regular character, "Floyd R. Turbo", who in a 1977 show was made to defend nuclear power: "Put me down as an American who favors building nuclear plants. I say nuclear energy plants are safe... So what if people begin to glow a little bit? At least we won't be faced with the question of not knowing where our children are at night. I say we should trust science... science has given us cyclamates, saccharine and DDT... So what if an atomic plant blows up? The people who say that, they are afraid to die. I'm not afraid to die because all my life I have lived by the good book, the American Legion magazine... What do they expect us to use for fuel, buffalo chips. Now, these jerks want to use solar energy for electricity. Doesn't that take the cake? How do they expect me to plug my drill into the sun? I'd need a very big step ladder..." "Johnny Carson Sets Us Straight", The Nation, June 18, 1977, 746.

[158] Interview with Frances Crowe, April 24, 1996.

[159] Interview with Vincent O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

defensive about the popular image of working class Americans. In one speech, O'Brien declared, "It is interesting to note that the environmentalists consider the construction workers a bunch of rowdies who come into the area and disrupt a whole city or town."[160] In another speech, O'Brien exclaimed, "... the misnomer about the construction worker willing to build anything for a job is a lot of crap. We have families and we are just as concerned with their future as anyone could be. Let's give them a break."[161]

O'Brien, who remained on the front line of the nuclear debate into the late 1970s, continued to develop this theme. At a debate at Hampshire College in 1978, O'Brien gave his most spirited and memorable defense of blue-collar workers, one in which he linked economic fears with a sense of cultural siege:

> I am one of the rowdy construction workers – Joe or Johnny six pack – or one of the many names that construction workers are called. But you ought to understand where we're coming from... We are a highly visible group. You can find us in any town in the U.S.A. We are the target of many groups. It is small wonder we get uptight. For years now, multinationals have been raising havoc with the American worker. We in the labor movement have helplessly seen industries disappear from the U.S. as the huge multinationals have moved out of our country... and as... imports of foreign produced goods have spelled doom for many domestic industries. Environmentalists have taken their toll, multinationals have taken their toll and the high cost of energy has taken its toll.[162]

As the debate over nuclear energy continued into the 1970s, more and more environmentalists came to sympathize with the plight of blue collar Americans and sought to build bridges between greens and labor. Among these was Sam Lovejoy's friend, antinuclear journalist-activist Harvey Wasserman who became involved with a

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[160] George O'Brien, Draft Speech # 2, Box 6, Folder 80, IBEW.

[161] George O'Brien, Draft Speech # 1, Box 6, Folder 80, IBEW.

[162] George O'Brien, Draft Speech #3, Box 6, Folder 80, IBEW.

Washington, D.C.- based group, Environmentalists for Full Employment (EFE). EFE accused corporations of "environmental blackmail" by threatening layoffs in retaliation for environmental protection measures. EFE noted that workers were often those who suffered the most from industrial pollution, which they encountered in the workplace.[163] Wasserman conceded, however, "Unfortunately, environmentalists have often been insensitive to working class needs and have been late to make the case that fighting pollution can also create jobs." Wasserman continued, "… as a single issue campaign, environmentalism still lacks the in-depth clout to make a lasting impact. What could tip the balance is a working alliance with organized labor."[164] Despite these efforts, labor-environmentalist cooperation remained the exception to the rule throughout the 1970s.

During the final days before the November 5th vote, lobbying by the antinuclear movement, NU and labor all reached a fever pitch. The results of the vote came as a stunning surprise to many involved. Although the moratorium on the Montague reactors met with defeat, the narrow margin surpassed even the expectations of the heavily

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[163] Environmentalists for Full Employment Bulletin, *circa* 1977, Box 7, Folder 91,IBEW.

[164] Harvey Wasserman, "Environmentalists, Labor Joining Hands", undated article, *circa* 1977, Box 7, Folder 95, IBEW. The EFE fought an uphill battle. At its October 1975 convention, the AFL-CIO issued a nuclear energy endorsement stated, "Government action is required to promote public acceptance of nuclear power. Steps should be taken to reduce lead time for getting plants into production." AFL-CIO American Federationist, July 1975, 3. One labor leader wrote to O'Brien that unions like the United Mine Workers and the railroad unions, "cannot be expected to take an active interest in nuclear power, nor is support expected from white collar workers. The fact that specific jobs are at stake for the construction trades is sufficient to command an endorsement from these unionists, however, since, as one seasoned observer recently pointed out, 'If one union has a major "guts job" problem, other unions provide support for them… the amount of work even the construction trades can devote to nuclear lobbying in Washington should not be underestimated." Memo: Gene Sturgeon to George O'Brien, September 22, 1975, Box 6, Folder 85, IBEW. Yet in 1975, the United Autoworkers began reaching out to environmentalists by hosting a conference at its Black Lake, Michigan retreat, which brought together unions representing machinists, sheet metal workers, miners and farm workers to support environmental initiatives and work toward alliances with environmental groups. The conference gave Wasserman hope. He wrote of environmentalism and labor, "… both movements are in a critical state of flux right now and important segments of the tow are working toward a mutual understanding. When they reach it, we can look forward to breathing some clean air again." "Environmentalists, Labor Joining Hands", undated article, *circa* 1977, Box 7, Folder 95, IBEW.

outspent antinuclear movement. Fifty-two percent of the voters supported building the twin reactors, whereas forty-seven percent opposed them.[165] Less than one year after Lovejoy's assault on the weather tower, the antinuclear movement in western Massachusetts had succeeded in dividing the region almost down the middle. Given the dearth of public discussion before 1974, it was a major accomplishment. The issue of nuclear energy had been elevated dramatically and the debate in western Massachusetts had drawn the attention of a national audience. Speaking of the time before he toppled the Montague weather tower, Lovejoy said, "In my opinion, even the hippies around here in the area weren't getting their back up in the air and asking, 'Well, how are we gonna fight this?'"[166] The transformation that took place in the region over the course of 1974 was remarkable. Fred Zapinski of the Alternative Energy Coalition crowed that for a group operating with "a shoestring $700 budget using volunteers – we felt we did a damn good job."[167] O'Brien, however, dismissed the movement's claims of moral victory, comparing them to "the politician who finds some sort of solace in the vote no matter what the margin of defeat."[168] More soberly, NU President Lelan Sillin noted a

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[165] Hartford Times, December 23, 1974. Undated newspaper article by Cindy Weiss, *circa* November 6, 1974, Box 7, Folder 97, IBEW. The total was 22,464 votes for the moratorium and 25, 806 votes against. 15,301 residents supported dismantling the existing plants in Rowe, Massachusetts and Vernon, Vermont to 31,948 against. In Montague, increasing opposition to the plants was evident in the 1,091 votes for the moratorium compared to 1,948 votes against. Undated newspaper article by Cindy Weiss. Also, Hartford Times, December 23, 1974.

[166] The Saboteur, 66.

[167] Hartford Times, December 23, 1974.

[168] *Ibid.*

"deterioration in the public climate" and warned against "making energy policy a victim of partisan politics [and] encouraging a public vendetta against the energy industry..."[169]

Although the vote on the Montague reactors invigorated the antinuclear movement and caused NU representatives concern, the vote was ambiguous. Unlike the referendum on the Montague reactors, the one calling for the dismantling of Yankee Rowe and Vermont Yankee received only 33% of the three-county vote, reflecting perhaps a "not in my back yard" sentiment by a quarter of those who had voted for the Montague moratorium, more than an across-the-board opposition to nuclear power.[170] Some, however, like Vince O'Connor, who had campaigned for the referendum, saw the second vote as a victory: "One third of the people, which is astounding, thought we should close Vernon. I think it was the second vote [that was significant] I mean you can always be against something that hasn't happened yet, but to be for closing a nuclear power plant that's already there and employs people and so forth, [means] we had been very effective."[171]

The referendum had perhaps its biggest impact on liberal state senator John Olver. A Pennsylvania native gifted with extraordinary academic skills, Olver completed an accelerated program to graduate high school at the age of fifteen, received a B.A. from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute at the age of eighteen, earned a Master from Tufts in a year, then went on to earn his doctorate in chemistry from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1961. From Cambridge, Olver and his wife Rose, who

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[169] Address by Lelan F. Sillin, Jr. to the Colony Club of Springfield, Massachusetts, February 26, 1975, Box 7, Folder 97, IBEW.

[170] Hartford Times, December 23, 1974.

[171] Interview with Vince O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

earned a doctorate from Harvard, moved to Amherst, where he became professor of chemistry at the University of Massachusetts and she became a professor of psychology, and later women's studies, at Amherst College. In 1968, Olver moved into public service when he was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives and earned a reputation as a consummate liberal. In 1973, Olver won the state senate district encompassing Hampshire, Berkshire and parts of Hamden counties. Still, the aura of academia clung to Olver, whose aloof, intellectual demeanor prompted many who knew him to comment that he seemed more comfortable in a classroom than on the campaign trail.[172] Of Olver, Frances Crowe stated, "He was a follower, not a leader. He wasn't very courageous."[173] Vince O'Connor recalled, "John Olver... was a very bright guy... not much of a wind-mill tilter."[174]

Prior to the vote, Olver had supported nuclear power, arguing that scientists and experts could be trusted to determine the safety of nuclear energy. Certain the referendum on the Montague reactors would go down to sizable defeat, Olver had declared that he would follow the wishes of the voters.[175] The surprising percentage of voters opposed to the Montague reactors took Olver by surprise. After the vote, Olver stated that the moratorium's narrow defeat "indicates more concern about nuclear power issues in this district than I had expected. This vote shows how quickly anti-nuclear

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[172] "Olver: A Professor of Liberal Arts", Boston Globe, May 1, 1991, 7; "1st District, Left to Right Bipartisan Consensus: Olver is a True Liberal", Boston Globe, May 26, 1991, 21.

[173] Interview with Frances Crowe, April 24, 1996.

[174] Interview with Vince O'Connell, May 13, 2003.

[175] Price, 9 and 11.

feeling has grown in this area during the past six months..."[176] Elsewhere, Olver commented, "Three months ago, I would have suspected the whole thing would lose by a 2 to 1 or 3 to 1 margin... [the vote] is certainly a tribute to the work done by many groups on the nuclear issue – a great many questions have been raised in the public's mind."[177] Henceforth, Olver attempted to straddle the divisive issue by supporting nuclear power in general while opposing the building of the Montague twin reactors until questions concerning the reprocessing, transport and storage of nuclear waste had been adequately answered.[178]

The polarization of the heavily Democratic district foreshadowed a division that increasingly confronted many Democrats throughout the 1970s. Environmentalists and organized labor comprised two core constituencies for many Democratic politicians. In the 1960s, the Democratic Party had been wrought with divisions over civil rights and the Vietnam War. In the 1970s, nuclear energy and environmentalism became the new challenge for Democrats. Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy had assiduously courted both labor and environmentalists. After the Montague vote, Kennedy intensified his support for the antinuclear movement. Kennedy proposed an amendment to the new law replacing the AEC with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) – the law made the NRC a strictly regulatory body, separating nuclear regulation from nuclear advocacy – that would require the federal government to provide funds for the usually outspent antinuclear "interveners" at nuclear regulatory hearings.

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[176] Hartford Times, December 23, 1974.

[177] Undated newspaper article by Cindy Weiss, *circa* November 1974, Box 7, Folder 95, IBEW.

[178] Greenfield Recorder, June 3, 1977.

The year following the 1974 referenda was relatively quiet in western Massachusctts. Although local groups were permitted to testify against nuclear energy before the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) as interveners, public participation was largely limited at the *pro forma* hearings.[179] Meanwhile, Thomas Lesser and other movement attorneys advised activists to focus their efforts on the state rather than the federal government, noting of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, "no utility proposal has ever been rejected by the fcderal agency." Rather, they argued, the movement should focus its efforts on the recently created Massachusctts Energy Facilities Siting Council, which included environmental representatives and was, they argucd, not beholden to thc nuclcar industry. The lawycrs noted, "... the fact that Governor [Michael] Dukakis has announced his opposition to the proposed Montague plants will ccrtainly not be without influence."[180]

As the Montaguc plants remained on hold, public and political support waned. Publicity surrounding the plants continued to be negative. In 1978, eight Hampshire College students in an Environmcntal Studies and Public Policy program, working with two ecologists, two physicists and a psychologist published a glossy, professional-looking, sixty-four page book entitled, Meltdown at Montague: A Citizens Guide to the Consequences of an Accidcnt at a Nuclear Reactor in Franklin County, Massachusetts. The well-researched study explained thc workings of a nuclear reactor with graphs, and detailed various scenarios for a reactor core meltdown and its possible consequences for

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[179] Interview with Frances Crowe, April 23, 1996. Recalling her experiences with public participation at NRC hearings, Crowe stated, "They don't really let anyone say very much."

[180] David Kaplan, Thomas Lesser, William Newman, To: Citizens Concerned about the Proposed Montague Nuclear Plant, Re: Analysis of Proposed Intervention in EFSC Hearings", October 11, 1977, Frances Crowe Collection, Sophia Smith Collection.

western Massachusetts. The book began with the following caveat: "It should be emphasized that the probability of such a serious accident occurring is very small, although there remains considerable controversy over just what 'small' means in a quantitative sense." Such a caveat did little to diminish the impact of the book's cover illustration of twin nuclear reactors with "Meltdown at Montague" emblazoned across the top.[181] The group also produced a half-hour film depicting a fictitious newscast reporting on a reactor core meltdown at Montague.[182]

As the political climate deteriorated, NU, beset with economic difficulties, announced the first in a series of deferrals of the Montague reactors in the fall of 1974. Originally the twin reactors were slated to be operational in 1981 and 1983 respectively.[183] In September 1974, NU announced the deferral of the first plant to 1982. Then, in February 1975, NU President Sillin announced a deferral of both plants to 1986 and 1988 respectively. Citing double-digit inflation, high interest rates, a decline in investor confidence and the first reduction in electricity sales in twenty-five years, Sillin stated, "Even Millstone Unit No. 3 [in Connecticut] could become victim of the present climate."[184] NU remained committed to building the Montague reactors, Sillin continued, "provided public and regulatory support were forthcoming for that level of utility rates necessary to attract capital investment... meanwhile the clock ticks on and

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[181] Meltdown at Montague: A Citizens Guide to the Consequences of an Accident at a Nuclear Reactor in Franklin County, Massachusetts, Environmental Studies and Public Policy Group, Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts, 1978. A copy is in the Frances Crowe Collection, Sophia Smith Collection.

[182] Promotional flier for Meltdown at Montague book and video, Frances Crowe Collection, Sophia Smith Collection.

[183] Memo from Robert Barrett, NU Consultant, Reasons Why Hearings for Montague Nuclear Power Station Should Not Be Postponed", June 23, 1975, Box 7, Folder 94, IBEW.

[184] Address by Lelan F. Sillin, Jr. to the Colony Club of Springfield, Massachusetts, February 26, 1975, Box 7, Folder 97, IBEW.

conditions grow more threatening... I assure you that we remain committed to the construction of these units at Montague... for what is at stake is more than the deferral of planned construction. It is the deferral of all of our mutual plans and hopes for the development of this region and the prosperity of its people."[185] For the IBEW, the deferrals were disappointing. The IBEW international leadership issued a statement reading, "The impact of zero electrical growth is felt by many IBEW members. The delay and cancellation of projects have forced us on the unemployment rolls."[186]

On March 28, 1979, nuclear energy advocates suffered a devastating blow as the world learned of the near reactor core meltdown of the Unit 2 nuclear reactor at Three Mile Island, Pennsylvania, and the attendant evacuation of over 100,000 people. For NU, as for the entire United States nuclear industry, Three Mile Island meant public relations damage control. On May 14, 1979, NU took out a full page ad in The Daily Hampshire Gazette that began, "In the wake of the Three Mile Island accident, there have been public expressions of doubt, of fear, of concern over Northeast Utilities' reliance on nuclear power... while it may not yet be possible to answer all the questions that are in people's minds, we urge you to seek out facts and to avoid the emotionalism which obscures truth and impedes the making of rational decisions." The piece went on to argue that noone at Three Mile Island received more radiation than an average annual exposure to medical x-rays, and assured readers that the plant designs at Connecticut Yankee and Millstone differed from that used at Three Mile Island. NU argued that it continued to examine alternatives, but that coal produced pollution and mining

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[185] *Ibid.*

[186] "Impact of Power Plant Deferrals to Construction Workers, manufacturing Workers, Utility Workers", IBEW Utility Department Study, January 1975, Box 7, Folder 93, IBEW.

accidents, oil was expensive and unreliable, hydro was limited, and solar power decades away. The ad concluded, "It is our firm belief that the decision to pursue the nuclear alternative was the correct one for this region... We continue to have faith in nuclear energy..."[187] In 1981, NU announced the "temporary cancellation" of the Montague reactors.[188]

In an interview with the Valley Advocate, Harvey Wasserman proclaimed victory: "... the fact of the matter is we succeeded in Montague. If there hadn't been citizen opposition, there would be a plant there, or there would be construction there." Again, the Vietnam analogy loomed large. "Throughout the Nixon years in the war, I am convinced that the extension of the war in Viet Nam was solely designed to confuse any possible feeling on the part of the antiwar movement that it was responsible for ending the war... I am sure the same thing is true with the nuke... It has taken them all this time to organize their orderly withdrawal. The last thing that Northeast Utilities wants to do is admit that their defeat has been at the hands of a citizen movement. I think it's important people realize this."[189] Ultimately, the Montague twin nuclear reactor power station was never built.

The degree to which Lovejoy's sabotage and the subsequent movement against nuclear energy led to the deferrals is difficult to gauge. As the 1970s progressed, many energy companies sought rate increases from consumers to build the plants that had been ballyhooed as capable of producing energy "too cheap to meter". The questions raised

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[187] Daily Hampshire Gazette, May 14, 1979, 14.

[188] "Interview: Sam Lovejoy and Harvey Wasserman", by Ben Eaton and Gary Nielson, Valley Advocate, January 21, 1981, 6-7.

[189] *Ibid.*

by the antinuclear movement certainly played an important role in the erosion of public confidence so necessary for further nuclear expansion. Moreover, the growing public participation as interveners at ACRS hearings in Massachusetts and around the country bogged down many of the nuclear industry's representatives, resulting in further expenses and delays for the nuclear industry.

As 1974 came to a close, the antinuclear movement in western Massachusetts could look back on a year of tremendous growth. The movement established a pattern that later became evident in the movements against nuclear weapons, U.S. intervention in Central America and apartheid. Radicals employing direct action had forced the issue of nuclear energy to the fore, thereby mobilizing grass roots participation and galvanizing more mainstream groups into action, which in turn forced politicians to address the new issue of concern. Meanwhile, the western Massachusetts antinuclear movement produced several new national leaders, most notably Harvey Wasserman, Anna Gyorgy and Sam Lovejoy himself, who went on to play major roles in the national antinuclear movement. The same pattern would repeat itself with the nuclear weapons freeze movement six years later. After the opening battle over Montague, many western Massachusetts antinuclear activists would soon throw themselves into the 1970s' most dramatic confrontation over a nuclear power plant: the 1976-9 showdown in Seabrook, New Hampshire.

CHAPTER II

MASSACHUSETTS ANTINUCLEAR ACTIVISTS AND THE BATTLE OVER THE NUCLEAR POWER STATION AT SEABROOK, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Prologue: The Impact of the Antinuclear Occupation at Wyhl, West Germany, 1975

In February 1975, local antinuclear activists in the upper-Rhine town of Wyhl, West Germany, frustrated with the lack of legal recourse to stop a proposed nuclear power station in thcir town, spontaneously occupied the site of the proposed nuclear reactor. The occupation soon grew to 28,000 antinuclear activists and lasted ten months. The occupation at Wyhl captured the imagination of American antinuclear activists who saw in the Wyhl protest a model, which embraced the values and tactics that Sam Lovcjoy and his allies hoped to bring to the American antinuclear movement. The Wyhl occupation had both a local base and an international perspective which embodied the 1970s slogan "Think Globally, Act Locally". Beginning with local environmentalists, farmcrs, vintncrs and members of the local Protestant clergy, the Wyhl occupation soon attractcd activists from all corners of West Germany as well as France and Switzerland, just across the West German boarder. The movement embraced a philosophy of local grass-roots democracy and was heavily influenced by the growing European environmentalism that the more militant, sectarian groups of the West German New Left had dismissed until that time as *bourgeois*. With its virtual tent-city on the site, the Wyhl occupation took on a countercultural sensibility, which meshed well with the occupation's rural, local base.[1] The communal, non-violent occupation at Wyhl resonated strongly with the American rural, countercultural left, which was then

[1] Christian Joppke, Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy: A Comparison of Germany and the United States (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 97-101.

emerging as the driving force of New England's direct-action, antinuclear movement. As Lovejoy's friend and fellow resident of the Montague Farm, Anna Gyorgy stated, "The action [at Wyhl] inspired nuclear opponents throughout the world."[2] Over the coming years, as protest against the proposed nuclear site at Seabrook, New Hampshire grew, leading American activists would refer frequently to the example of the Wyhl occupation which ultimately succeeded in stopping construction of the proposed West German nuclear power plant.

Over the long term, the Wyhl occupation helped plant the seeds that would grow into the West German Green Party in the 1980s; in important ways, however, the Wyhl occupation had a larger immediate impact on American antinuclear activists than on those in Europe. As the antinuclear movement grew in West Germany, it was largely taken over by more sectarian, Marxist groups (known in West Germany as the "C-Groups" due to their communist orientations) and later by urban anarchist groups known as the "Black Block", which attempted to steer the movement in an anti-state direction.[3] Unlike the peaceful occupation at Wyhl, the West German antinuclear movement became caught up in a spiraling cycle of violence in which activists temporarily blinded police with mirrors, employed slingshots and other weapons and were met by the full-weight of state power. The pitched battles between helmeted antinuclear militants and West German police in riot gear reached an apex in 1977 when unrelated acts of left-wing terror by the West German Red Brigades (a group whose violence far exceeded the SLA and Weatherman in America) reached an all time high. Under siege by the above-ground C-groups and the underground Red Brigades, the West German government

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[2] *Ibid.* 79.

[3] *Ibid.* 102-111.

responded with severe restrictions on civil liberties that bordered on martial law and constituted one of the German Republic's most serious constitutional. The shift to revolutionary violence, which precipitated the government crackdown, squandered the positive image the antinuclear movement had won with the West German public at Wyhl.[4] The West German antinuclear movement would not recover until the late 1970s and early 1980s when the countercultural and environmental wings of the movement began to reassert themselves.[5]

In contrast, the American antinuclear movement that exploded at Seabrook attempted to maintain the values and tactics that proved so successful at Wyhl, Germany. Sam Lovejoy's sabotage had helped begin the redefinition of the American left. That trend accelerated rapidly with the protests at Seabrook as the antinuclear left continued to define itself in terms of moral witness, the philosophy of non-violence, the counterculture, participatory democracy, feminism and especially grassroots localism. In many ways, the American left in the latter half of the 1970s came full circle, returning to the roots of the early 1960s New Left and Civil Rights Movement, the philosophy and tactics of which were eclipsed by the revolutionary militancy of the late-1960s antiwar movement. It was this trend that increasingly attracted many new activists to the non-violent, direct action movement at Seabrook. As Barbara Epstein notes in her important study of the direct action movements of the 1970s and 1980s, Political Protest and Cultural Revolution, the founders of the Clamshell Alliance, who led the opposition to the Seabrook plant, were mostly in their late twenties and early thirties, many "the younger brothers and sisters" of the 1960s anti-war generation, who were infected by the

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[4] *Ibid.* 102-111.

[5] *Ibid.* 116-120.

idealism of the 1960s, yet turned off by the New Left's shift to violent confrontation.[6] The dominant non-violent trend of the Seabrook movement would be challenged from within by a minority who wished to return to the more militant style of the Vietnam-era New Left and emulate the more confrontational style then dominating the European antinuclear movement. The Seabrook movement was the defining movement for the American Left in the 1970s and 1980s. As Epstein writes, "The non-violent direct action movement of the late 1970s and 1980s began in 1976 with the formation of the Clamshell Alliance..."[7]

The Birth of the Clamshell Alliance

In 1969, the Public Service Company of New Hampshire (PSNH) announced its plans to build twin nuclear reactors on the seacoast town of Seabrook, New Hampshire. PSNH would be a majority shareholder in the project and the remainder would be funded by investments from eight other New England utilities, including Northeast Utilities. PSNH, which provided 90% of New Hampshire's energy, planned to use energy generated from the twin reactors to supply power not only to New Hampshire but the entire New England region. The quiet town of Seabrook, a beach resort along New Hampshire's eighteen-mile coastline, had a small off-season population of 5,300. The town's population swelled, however, during summer months as residents from greater New England flocked to Seabrook to enjoy the town's beaches and scenery. PSNH

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[6] Barbara Epstein, Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 84.

[7] *Ibid.* 58.

chose Seabrook due to its proximity to the ocean, which promised to supply the hundreds of thousands of gallons of water needed to run the plants' cooling systems.[8]

From the beginning, a small number of the town's residents expressed concern about the proposed plants' impact on Seabrook's ecosystem, as well as aesthetic concerns about the impact of the nuclear generating station's large, gray towers on the holiday resort's idyllic, beach-front scenery. Prior to the 1970s, there had been interventions in different parts of the nation at the AEC's licensing hearings, which raised safety concerns and in some cases brought about safety improvements in proposed plants. The interventions, however, always came late in the process when the plants were near completion and were restricted by law to narrow technical objections.[9] These narrow grounds for public intervention expanded greatly, however, after the 1970 Environmental Protection Act, which mandated environmental impact studies (EIS) for all proposed federal projects. Subsequent court decisions ruled that the environmental impact studies required by the act applied to the AEC, and its successor, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), as well, thus broadening the possible grounds for citizen interventions. By the early 1970s there was a dramatic increase of citizen interventions using the Environmental Protection Act, most commonly challenging nuclear power plants under construction on the grounds of low level radiation emitted into the atmosphere and thermal pollution (the rise in temperature in bodies of water

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[8] Harvey Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea", The Nation, September 11, 1976. Reprinted in Harvey Wasserman, ed. Energy War: Reports from the Front (Westport, Conn.: Lawrence Hill and Co. Publishers, 1979.) 49.

[9] Henry F. Bedford, Seabrook Station: Citizen Politics and Nuclear Power (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990.) 64-93.

caused by the return of cooling water to its source, which often resulted in a rise of water temperature by as much as 40 degrees.)[10]

A small group of New Hampshire residents responded to these changes in the early 1970s by forming the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League (SAPL). The SAPL focused much of its attention on challenging PSNH's request for a licensing permit for the Seabrook plants on the grounds of thermal pollution in the waters around Seabrook, which would affect local marine life, especially the numerous clam beds in the area. The SAPL had a few years earlier stopped construction of an oil refinery by Aristotle Onasis along New Hampshire's upper coast. The members of the SAPL, predominantly white, educated and upper middle-class, now focused on a strictly legal interventionist strategy for stopping construction of the Seabrook Nuclear Power Station. Although the SAPL won several suspensions of plant construction, these victories largely constituted delaying tactics, as construction of the plants resumed after several months' delay.[11]

In 1975, the SAPL elected as its president thirty-one-year old Guy Chichester, a self-employed carpenter from Rye, New Hampshire, just outside of Seabrook. Born and raised in Queens, New York, Chichester was the son of a fireman and telephone operator. He eventually relocated to Long Island, then served four years in the Navy and eventually moved to Rye, New Hampshire in the early 1970s with his wife Madeleine and their children where he made a living as a carpenter. Chichester had campaigned for George McGovern in New Hampshire's 1972 primary and played an important role in

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[10] Joppke, 33; Robert J. Duffy, Nuclear Politics in America: A History and Theory of Government Regulation (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1997), 59-61.

[11] Bedford, 64-93.

fighting the Onasis oil refinery.[12] Chichester brought to the SAPL a more militant personal style than the more staid SAPL presidents who had preceded him. As 1975 progressed, Chichester increasingly came to believe the narrow, legalistic focus of the SAPL needed to be radically broadened. At public forums dealing with the Seabrook issue, Chichester began denouncing the heads of PSNH and New Hampshire's political elites in ever more vehement terms, making many members of the SAPL uncomfortable.[13] Working to employ new means for challenging the Seabrook plants, in March of 1976 Chichester succeeded in having a non-binding referendum concerning the Seabrook Nuclear Power Station put to the town's year-round residents. Unlike Montague, Massachusetts two years earlier, whose residents voted *for* nuclear power in a referendum, the residents of Seabrook, mindful of the plants' potential impact on the local environment and tourism, voted 768 to 632 to "ban transportation or storage of nuclear materials associated with the [nuclear] plants" -- in affect a vote against the plants.[14] As had been the case with Montague, the Seabrook referendum set off a wave of similar referenda and town-meeting resolutions in nearby towns, most around the Seabrook area and one just across the border in Massachusetts.[15] Just as had been the case in western Massachusetts, where neighboring towns felt they would enjoy few of the immediate economic benefits of nuclear power while taking on all the risks, each of the eight towns that took a vote on the reactors voted against the Seabrook power station.

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[12] Steve Varnum, "The Voice of Protest", Concord Monitor Online, August 22, 1999. Retrieved, May 15, 2003.

[13] *Ibid.* 74-5.

[14] Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea", The Nation, September 11, 1976; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 50.

[15] *Ibid.* The New Hampshire towns were Hampton, Hampton Falls, North Hampton, Exeter, Kensington, Durham and Rye. They were joined by Sailisbury, Massachusetts.

These local examples of nuclear opposition had little impact, however, on PSNH, the NRC or New Hampshire's conservative governor, Meldrim Thomas, all of whom remained adamantly committed to building the Seabrook Nuclear Power Station.[16]

As 1976 progressed, Chichester became even more disillusioned with the legal intervention process, which he now condemned publicly as designed by elites to serve elites and as being impervious to public opinion. In an interview, Chichester recalled, "Our time and energy were going into the hearings presentations. And what we thought was that our little lawyer there, who everyone was going around scraping up bucks for, that he's able to do it. But on the right side of him there was a bank of lawyers that were getting $1,000 a day. And on the left side of him was a bank of lawyers that were getting $900 a day. It was a total gang-up picture."[17] Chichester began talking of the need to employ the tactics of non-violent civil disobedience, about which he knew relatively little. At the same time, Chichester came to believe that opposition to Seabrook needed to focus less on environmental impacts and more on the dangers of full-scale catastrophe; e.g., potential reactor core meltdown. Soon Chichester was criticizing his own SAPL as too white, middle-class, legalistic and cautious, setting off rumblings of discontent throughout the SAPL membership, much of which now became thoroughly alienated from Chichester. Moderates within the organization openly denounced Chichester's vociferous style and accused him of running roughshod over the wishes of the group's members. Meanwhile, Chichester had begun making contact with New England's more radical antinuclear activists, including New Hampshire Quakers and

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[16] Wasserman. "Opening Battle of the Eighties", Mother Jones August 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 83.

[17] *Ibid.* 82.

those who had been leading the fight against the proposed nuclear plant in Montague, including Sam Lovejoy. Chichester screened Lovejoy's Nuclear War at a SAPL meeting and argued for a Montague style movement. "That was about all I needed," recalled Chichester, "I had been thinking about how do we get people in the streets? I didn't really know how. I was not quite ready yet."[18] Chichester's networking with New England radicals further accelerated his radicalization, so that by year's end, he had broken with the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League.[19]

While Chichester was undergoing his transformation from legal intervener to radical opponent of nuclear power, other New Hampshirites, already grounded in the counterculture and more militant environmentalism, shot the first radical salvo in the fight against the Seabrook Nuclear Power Station. As many late-1960s New England hippie-radicals fled the cities for rural Vermont and western Massachusetts, a few chose rural New Hampshire as their home. Among these were a group of radical pacifists who set up a commune called the Greenleaf Harvesters' Guild in Ware, New Hampshire, not far from Seabrook. The members of the Guild sought to integrate Gandhian political and spiritual principles with a 1960s countercultural lifestyle and a focus on environmentalism. On January 4, 1976, in an act reminiscent of Sam Lovejoy's action at Montague almost two years earlier, an apple picker at the collective, 22-year old Ron Rieck, climbed up a 175-foot weather tower on the Seabrook construction site and stated that he would stay there as a protest against the plant. Rieck camped out on the top of the tower for thirty-six hours while friends brought him food and supplies. Among those

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[18] Steve Varnum, "The Voice of Protest", Concord Monitor Online, August 22, 1999, 5. Retrieved, May 15, 2003.

[19] Bedford, 74-6.

who came to support Rieck were two members of the Cambridge (Boston) American Friends Service Committee, Suki Rice and Elizabeth Boardman, two of the earliest Massachusetts residents to get involved in the Seabrook debate. Finally, authorities prevailed upon Rieck to climb down from the top of the tower where local police awaited him with hot tea. PSNH never charged Rieck with trespass and the activist was later acquitted of the charge of "creating a public nuisance". Nevertheless, Rieck's action was a harbinger of things to come.[20]

By the spring of 1976, Chichester and other radical New Hampshire opponents of the Seabrook plants had established ties with other radicals from New England, especially Massachusetts. Meeting at Chichester's home in Rye, a small number of these activists began the planning that resulted in the founding of the Clamshell Alliance. At a larger meeting of fifty people a few weeks later, the principles of the Clamshell Alliance were ratified. A number of Massachusetts activists were among the Clamshell's founders. Among them were the Boston-based AFSC activists Suki Rice and Elizabeth Boardman, veteran activists who became the Clamshell's main advisors on the principles of non-violence and Quaker practices of affinity groups and consensus decision-making. Also joining the early founders by the end of the year were Sam Lovejoy and Anna Gyorgy who were criss-crossing the country as antinuclear ambassadors, giving talks and encouraging the building of locally based antinuclear movements.[21]

A number of other western Massachusetts activists were on hand from the beginning. Especially prominent were those with pacifist and civil rights experience.

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[20] Epstein 62-3; Wasserman, "Nuclear War By the Sea", The Nation, September 11, 1976; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 53.

[21] Epstein, 63-5. One of Boardman's sons was a draft resister in the 1969s. Interview with Vince O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

Among them was a former Philadelphia civil rights activist Mary Wentworth, and Wally and Juanita Nelson, an African American couple who moved to western Massachusetts in the early 1970s and were close with Randy Kehler. Wally Nelson was among the original CORE members in the early 1940s, was a conscientious objector during World War II, went on to join the pacifist group Peacemakers and became a lifelong war tax resister. Wally met Juanita in prison in the 1940s when she went to interview him for a magazine article, and since then the two had been active in civil rights and antiwar struggles. Soon, other pacifists with civil rights experience joined, such as former CORE activist Kehler and former SNCC organizer Vince O'Connor, both of whom spent eighteen months in prison for draft resistance during the Vietnam War.[22]

The core activists of the early Clamshell brought an immense degree of organizational experience, which helped shape the new antinuclear movement. "People brought this enormous reservoir of organizational experience," said O'Connor. He added, "Their organizing methodology was the SNCC organizational methodology, which is you go into the community and you organize people about issues… grass roots organizing."[23] To a large degree, the Clamshell organizers looked to the Montague experience as a model. "I would say the genesis of this came out of Sam Lovejoy and his friends because of the Montague plant… We had sunk the Montague nuclear project with the referendum," recalled O'Connor.[24] Of the Montague group, O'Connor said:

> It became very clear to me not very long from moving [to western Massachusetts] in July 1974… that this group had community roots. They had identified nuclear power with harm to the community. And they

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[22] Interview with Vincent O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] *Ibid.*

> successfully said these things were dangerous to us. And they were extremely effective at community organizing… I had the instinct from working with SNCC that I could see this wasn't just a bunch of hippies, this was a real smart group of people that had great connections with the community, which all the radicals didn't have [in the 1960s] They had all these organizations, they were doing all this stuff, but none of them [after SNCC] had a community base.[25]

Thus, with organizational experience reaching back sometimes decades in pacifist and civil rights activism, along with the Montague model, members of the Clamshell Alliance – or "Clams", as they soon took to calling themselves – mapped out their long-term strategy for stopping the Seabrook plants. The members decided to begin a campaign of civil disobedience that would begin small and include only local New Hampshirites, and grow incrementally, bringing in activists from around the New England region. All activists were to be trained in the principles of non-violence and passive resistance prior to any action. Anyone taking part in civil disobedience would have to join a small "affinity group" numbering from five to fifteen other activists, with whom they would need to stay in contact during any occupation and maintain ties during any imprisonment. The affinity groups would also act as decision making bodies at any action, passing their group's consensus up through a "spoke" to a meeting of representatives of all the affinity groups. Beyond non-violent training and the formation of an affinity group, activists engaging in civil disobedience were expected to adhere to certain rules, including abstaining from any drug or alcohol use during an action and not destroying any property.[26]

In a strategy reminiscent of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) during the early civil rights movement and modeled on the Montague

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[25] *Ibid.*

[26] Epstein, 63-5.

experience, the Clamshell Alliance also decided that close ties with local Seabrook residents were imperative. Ties with the local community would not only give the movement legitimacy beyond its countercultural base, but over time would prove crucial logistically as local residents availed Clamshell activists access to their property where up to 500 activists would group, organize and camp out before undertaking mass civil disobedience. As the movement against the Seabrook Nuclear Power Station grew into the thousands and activists from throughout New England poured into the movement and pushed for more radical resistance, however, tensions would arise between those who felt increased radicalism would alienate the Clams' more conservative local base and those who felt locals should not have a privileged position within the movement since a nuclear catastrophe would affect all New Englanders.[27]

The principles and tactics of the Clamshell Alliance grew out of the experiences of the 1960s civil rights and antiwar movement and were tailored to build on those movement's successes and avoid a repeat their failures. The Clams' return to the non-violent philosophy of the early 1960s civil rights movement was especially attractive to many who joined the movement. One Clam activist, looking back on the appeal of the Clamshell Alliance stated: "The nonviolence is what really appealed to me. This is what I missed during the Vietnam War days. Though I was younger then, I wanted to get involved. But all I saw was the violence, and I did not want to get my head bashed. I was terrified of that. So here was that non-violent group, the Boston Clamshell, and I thought now I am home."[28]

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[27] Epstein, 76-8; Harvey Wasserman, "Resistance Gets Set for the Spring", The Nation, February 11, 1978; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 112.

[28] Joppke, 80.

The Clamshell was also heavily influenced by the environmental, countercultural, and feminist movements, which preceded it, and injected a more interpersonal and consensus-based approach to radical politics than had been the case with the male-dominated antiwar movement. Activist and historian Barbara Epstein captures the Clams' evolution from the late 1960s. Writing in her study of direct action movements, Epstein states:

> [The Clamshell Alliance] continued the New Left impulse toward a politics of living out one's values and rejected the anti-war movement's *machismo* and authoritarianism. For many of its members the Clamshell was a realization of the hope that seemed to fade in the late sixties for a movement based on shared commitments and mutual trust.[29]

Epstein argues that much of the Clamshell philosophy grew from the fact that many of its early founders were young. Writes Epstein:

> ... the largest numbers of those who became Clamshell activists were in their twenties or early thirties; the distinctive character of the Clamshell came from the particular outlook of this group, who were in a broad sense the younger brothers and sisters of the antiwar movement. They had been infected by the idealism of the sixties, but they had also seen the weaknesses of the antiwar movement, its tendency to resort to internal hierarchy and violent rhetoric, its sexism. Many of them had come to the Clamshell from the women's movement or the environmental/ecology movement, or had been deeply influenced by them.[30]

While this analysis overlooks the large numbers of veteran activists at the Clams' founding and the many younger college students who eventually swelled the Clamshell's ranks, Epstein's argument does help explain the outlook pushed by many of the Clam's early members.

Harvey Wasserman, a veteran of the Montague antinuclear fight, was an activist-journalist who had been active in the antiwar movement as a student at the University of

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[29] Epstein, 59.

[30] *Ibid.*, 84.

Michigan, Ann Arbor and was a veteran of the Liberation News Service (LNS) in the late 1960s. He, along with Cathy Wolff, would emerge as the Clamshell's two principle designated spokespeople. Early on, Wasserman highlighted the importance of non-violence to the new movement in the preface of his 1979 book, Energy War: Reports from the Front:

> The adoption of disciplined, non-violent mass action by late-seventies activists has indicated a maturity and staying power born of the work of Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Cesar Chavez. These tactics could carry the seeds of a new social order in the country rarely dreamed possible during the raucous, polarized days of Vietnam.[31]

The Clams adherence to non-violence and consensus were not its only attractive aspects in the latter half of the 1970s; of equal importance, early on, was the Clams' grassroots localism. Members of the Montague Farm in western Massachusetts especially pushed the need for a locally based movement. Anna Gyorgy, who joined the Clamshell Alliance a year after it came into existence, declared, "The movement is built from the bottom up. Here the movement starts with the town. There is no other way."[32] Reiterating this theme, Wasserman, writing for New Age magazine in 1977, declared, "If we learned anything from Vietnam, it was that meaningful, lasting change can only come from the bottom up. Nothing really moves in society until the people as a whole are convinced that it should."[33] Further articulating this theme was Sam Lovejoy who had made it a personal crusade to help inspire local antinuclear movements around the country, which he hoped would coalesce into a national antinuclear crusade. Like

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[31] Wasserman, Energy War: Reports from the Front, *xii*.

[32] Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea", The Nation, September 11, 1976; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 52.

[33] Wasserman, "Carter's Choice and Ours", New Age, January 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 68.

Gyorgy and Wasserman, Lovejoy looked to the 1960s as his point of reference: "The single biggest failure of the New Left was that it never had a home base. It had a student base. But movements don't last unless they have a home base, a population base, not just an age-segment base..."[34]

Although a majority of Seabrook residents had voted against the nuclear plants, many continued to view Clamshell activists with suspicion due to many of its members' countercultural attire and lifestyle. Over time, however, the Clamshell Alliance began to realize their vision of a radical movement against nuclear power rooted in the local community. Slowly, the Clamshell Alliance built bridges to a growing minority of Seabrook's more conventional, traditional, and frequently older residents. In some cases, local residents themselves reached out to the Clams. Among the latter were Tony and Louisa Santasucci who contacted the Clamshell Alliance after reading a blistering editorial against the Seabrook nuclear plants by Guy Chichester in one of Seabrook's local papers. For the Santasuccis, the Seabrook plants were literally a matter of "not in my backyard". Unbeknownst to the Santasuccis, PSNH planned to buy a swathe of their four-acre property which abutted the site of the nuclear power station. Tony Santasucci stumbled upon PSNH's plans when he stepped into a drill hole dug in his yard, spraining his ankle.[35] Harvey Wasserman, in one of his contemporary articles on the Seabrook movement, described Tony Santasucci, a sixty-two year old veteran of the Second World War and a truck mechanic by profession, as "a folk hero in the saga of the Seabrook

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[34] Epstein, 62.

[35] Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea", The Nation, September 11, 1976; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 49.

nuke."[36] Throughout the mass actions of 1977-8, the Santasuccis were the Clams' most reliable base among the area's more traditional residents, frequently offering their four-acre property as a staging area and campground for Clam direct actions.[37]

As was the case with many local Seabrook residents who opposed the plants but shied away from association with the Clamshell Alliance – what the Clams later referred to as "Closet Clams" -- Tony and Louisa Santasucci's opposition to the nuclear plants stemmed not from 1960s radicalism, but traditional New Hampshire localism and aversion to "big government". In one interview, Tony demanded, "If these plants are so safe, how come I can't get any insurance for my house?"[38] And, sounding a theme that resonated with many Seabrook residents, Santasucci declared, "All this plant is for is a quick buck. They're not gonna lower taxes; they'll raise 'em. Because, with people coming in to operate the plant, they'll need more schools, more fire department, more police department; they'll have to put sewers in... That's all gonna come out of the taxpayers of Seabrook. And the people of Seabrook don't have that money to spread."[39] Yet, despite the more conservative political tones of the Santasuccis' antinuclear position, their militancy warmed the hearts of many Clams. On one occasion, Tony proclaimed, "We don't need that plant and if you ask me, the Public Service is a bunch of liars. They'll never kick me out of here. They'll have to drag me out first."[40] When a

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[36] Wasserman, "The Opening Battle of the Eighties", Mother Jones, August 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 79.

[37] *Ibid.*, 79.

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] *Ibid.* 83.

[40] Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea", The Nation, September 11, 1976; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 49.

real estate agent with ties to PSNH told Louisa they'd bulldoze their home if they didn't sell, Louisa snapped back, "You bring that bulldozer in and I'll sit right in front of it."[41]

The feistiness of the Santasuccis was just the image of local opposition that the Clamshell Alliance wished to emphasize. The Santasuccis would appear in many local television interviews and were featured prominently in Seabrook '77, a documentary by western Massachusetts activist-film maker Robbie Leppzer, and The Last Resort, another documentary on the early Seabrook struggle by the makers of Lovejoy's Nuclear War.[42] For the early, predominantly countercultural members of the Clamshell Alliance, the support of stalwart locals gave the movement a sense of legitimacy and conformed to the movement's post-1960s grassroots vision.

By the late spring of 1976, then, the Clamshell Alliance had a set of working principles, an articulate philosophy of non-violence and grassroots localism, and a strategy of direct action, which called for incrementally growing site occupations. Within a year the Clamshell Alliance mobilized the largest mass movement of the latter half of the 1970s.

Round One: The Seabrook Occupation of August 1, 1976: Eighteen Arrests

Before the Clamshell Alliance was officially formed, protest against the Seabrook nuclear plants had already been growing. From Ron Rieck's January tower occupation through an April 1 rally by approximately 300 antinuclear activists outside

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[41] Wasserman, "The Opening Battle of the Eighties", Mother Jones, August 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 79.

[42] Robbie Leppzer, Seabrook: '77, Turning Tide Productions, 1977; Daniel Keller and Charles Light, The Last Resort, Green Mountain Post Films, 1978.

the Seabrook site, radical opponents of the Seabrook plants felt a growing momentum.[43] The early members of the Clams sought to build on this momentum by planning their first site occupation for early August. The intention was for a small occupation comprised of New Hampshire residents, which the Clams hoped to follow with occupations that would grow tenfold each time. By starting slowly and limiting arrests to local residents, the Clams could give their roots time to take hold before the movement was swamped by out-of-staters.[44]

Although the Clams had agreed New Hampshire residents would carry out the first occupation, over 600 antinuclear activists arrived in Seabrook on August 1 to show support for the occupation. According to Harvey Wasserman, these supporters came from every state in New England. The day began with speeches, chants and singing outside the Seabrook site. Some of the slogans that would become hallmarks of the antinuclear movement nationally were scrawled on signs, such as "Hell No! We Won't Glow!", "Split Wood, Not Atoms" and "Better Active Today Than Radioactive Tomorrow!" Evincing early media savvy, Clamshell organizers of the event succeeded in getting over forty journalists and reporters from both mainstream and alternative outlets to cover the event. As the rally ended, the eighteen pre-designated occupiers, all having undergone non-violence training, broke away from the crowd to cheers and marched onto the plant site with over thirty journalists, media reporters and their film crews in tow.[45]

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[43] Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea", The Nation, September 11, 1976; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 53.

[44] Epstein, 64-5.

[45] Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea", The Nation, September 11, 1976; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 53.

As the assemblage of Clams and reporters reached their destination, the occupiers began to plant small pine and maple saplings on the site of the future nuclear reactors. The police then announced that everyone who did not immediately vacate the site would be arrested, including members of the press and media. PSNH and political supporters of the Seabrook nuclear plants narrowly avoided the public relations disaster of arresting journalists. Covering the event for the nationally read left-liberal magazine The Nation, Harvey Wasserman wrote, "The order [to arrest] was quickly countermanded for the news teams, but the Clams sat down next to their saplings and allowed themselves to be dragged through two hundred yards of mud and underbrush to waiting police vans."[46] The Seabrook police station did not have room to accommodate the eighteen arrestees, so they were all booked at the nearby Hampton Falls police station, in the first of several Seabrook spillovers that within less than a year would engulf all of New Hampshire.[47]

The first Clamshell occupation had garnered a good deal of coverage from local and regional media as well as national attention from the alternative press. The Clams' early success with the media continued throughout the week as Clams protested the groundbreaking ceremony for the Seabrook Nuclear Power Station by Republican governor Meldrim Thomson and the heads of PSNH on August 5. Police had to clear out several older Seabrook residents who had parked themselves on chairs on a street through which the dignitaries' motorcade was to pass. The streets outside the site became the stage for scattered protests and several other street blockages, resulting in

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[46] *Ibid.*

[47] *Ibid.*;Epstein, 65.

three arrests, including that of Guy Chichester.[48] At the Exeter Inn, a twenty-four year old activist a Gretchen Siegler disrupted Governor Thomson's speech and was removed by police. Meanwhile, in a public relations boondoggle, the Governor's photo at the August 5 groundbreaking appeared in some local newspapers on August 6, juxtaposed on the front page with headlines on the thirty-first anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, a linkage of nuclear power with nuclear war which pronuclear public relations people normally sought to avoid.[49]

As Clamshell activists were waging their non-violent guerrilla campaign in the streets against Governor Thomson's Seabrook groundbreaking, the Seabrook antinuclear movement struck media gold. In nearby Manchester, Democratic presidential nominee Jimmy Carter was celebrating his New Hampshire primary victory earlier that year. Following the Georgia governor was the Vermont-based Green Mountain Post Films co-op, which had produced Lovejoy's Nuclear War, then being screened at antinuclear events around the country. Members of Green Mountain Post Films were able to get close enough to the future president to ask him about his thoughts on the August 1 Seabrook occupation. Since anything the presidential contender said was national news, Carter's answer gave the Clamshell publicity before a national audience.[50] Carter had already evoked cautious optimism among the growing national antinuclear movement by declaring he would make appointments to the NRC that would "be acceptable to Ralph Nader."[51] His reply to the Green Mountain Post Film's questions on civil disobedience

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[48] *Ibid.*

[49] *Ibid.*

[50] *Ibid.*

[51] Joppke, 70.

would give more encouragement to antinuclear activists, not only drawing nation-wide attention to the Seabrook civil disobedience campaign, but also seeming to approve it in principle. To a national audience then, Carter, a former nuclear engineer, answered:

> I've always felt that anybody who disagrees with the civil law in a matter of conscience has a right openly to express that [through civil] disobedience. At the same time, under our societal structure, it's necessary that they be willing to take the consequence of their disobedience. I believe that there's a place for nuclear power in our future. It ought to be minimized, it ought to be a last resort; [there] ought to be tough safety precautions guaranteed by the president and other leaders in Washington, with nuclear power plants located where people don't live, where the environment won't be destroyed, with the reactor core beneath ground level, where the reactor building is tightly sealed and they have a standardization of design, to make sure people can have confidence in the safety of nuclear power plants...[52]

After its first week of active non-violent protest, the Clamshell Alliance had fortuitously intersected with the bicentennial presidential campaign, winning national attention. The momentum that had been building throughout 1976 now began to snowball.

Round Two: The Seabrook Occupation of August 22, 1976: 180 Arrests

The August 22 occupation was in many ways a re-run of that of August 1, except for its scale. Again the occupiers began their trek to the plant site after a large legal rally, this time attracting over 1,500 protesters. The rally took place at Hampton Falls, near the Seabrook site, and once again the occupiers set off with an entourage of reporters in tow. The 180 site occupiers consisted of many New Hampshirites, but now the Clamshell Alliance opened the door to out-of-state activists. Many of the occupiers of August 22

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[52] Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea", The Nation, September 11, 1976; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 54. Carter's reply gave the Green Mountain Post filmmakers the name for their Seabrook documentary, The Last Resort.

had come from the Boston area and western Massachusetts that would turn into a flood the following spring.[53]

Like the eighteen occupiers from August 1, all 180 trespassing Clams were arrested, but this time were taken to Portsmouth armory over twenty miles away. There they were held overnight. The next day most were released on "personal recognizance" after being charged with "criminal trespass".[54] But ten of the 180 who had previously been arrested at the site, soon to be known as "the Seabrook Ten", were taken to jail and charged with "contempt" for violating an earlier Superior Court injunction. The "Seabrook Ten" were held until trial in early September. In a somewhat irregular move, the ten were to be tried by the very judge who had issued the injunction, Maurice Bois. When Massachusetts attorney Thomas Lesser, who had played an important role in the Lovejoy case, attempted to withdraw upon the wishes of some of the defendants to represent themselves, the court ordered Lesser to stay on as legal advisor to the "Seabrook Ten".[55]

Massachusetts activists were now playing a growing role in the movement against the Seabrook nuclear plants. Boston AFSC members Suki Rice and Elizabeth Boardman were the Clams' major advisors on non-violence and consensus, Thomas Lesser from Northampton was legal advisor – albeit reluctantly – to the "Seabrook Ten" – Sam Lovejoy and Anna Gyrogy had interrupted their cross-country antinuclear proselytizing to focus on Seabrook, and now Harvey Wasserman worked tirelessly to

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[53] *Ibid.* Epstein, 65.

[54] Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea", The Nation, September 11, 1976; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 55.

[55] Wasserman, "Trial of the Seabrook Ten", Valley Advocate, September 8 and 15, 1976; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 55-8.

publicize the Seabrook struggle in the nation's alternative press, from The Nation to New Age and regional papers such as western Massachusetts' Valley Advocate .[56]

Describing the injunctions as "fishy" and the trial of the "Seabrook Ten" as a "railroad", Wasserman argued that Judge Maurice Bois, appointed by Governor Thomson and a close associate of William Loeb, the conservative editor of the pro-nuclear Manchester Union Leader, was acting as a tool of New Hampshire's pro-nuclear establishment. Wasserman described the judge's refusal to let eight of the defendants who were representing themselves to cross-examine witnesses. He described the constant personal *tête-à-têtes* between Judge Bois and the defendants, writing, "The judge… conducted a game of psychic *jujitsu* with the defendants, browbeating them whenever possible. He persisted in calling Neil Linsky by a variety of names, ranging from 'Lipsky' to 'Lishky and got into a tiff with defendant Medora Hamilton over her wish to be addressed as 'Ms.'."[57]

As the trial wound up, Judge Bois allowed the defendants their final statements. The defendants sought to argue they were not so much in contempt of court as contempt of nuclear power. They insisted the injunction violated their civil liberties and maintained they were the victims of a political vendetta by New Hampshire's political elite led by Governor Thomson. Defendant Mary Gregory declared, "… ignorance of the law is no excuse, but ignorance of the dangers of nuclear power is also no excuse. All my actions have sprung from my concern for my children and my children's children."[58]

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[56] *Ibid.* 55-9.

[57] *Ibid.* 56.

[58] *Ibid.* 57.

The moral appeals had little affect on judge Bois, who declared all the defendants "guilty" and sentenced them to six months jail without bail pending appeal.[59]

The Draconian sentences offended many in New Hampshire who saw the judge's behavior during the trial and his sentences as strong-arming. The ten defendants were released after six days imprisonment by order of the New Hampshire Supreme Court. Describing the manner in which the law seemed to have been used by the court for political objectives, one of New Hampshire's U.S. Senators, Democrat John Durkin, proclaimed in disgust that Judge Bois had made New Hampshire appear to be "the Mississippi of the North."[60] Wasserman described Senator Durkin's statement as "a comment that should have offended the people of Mississippi."[61] After the trial, Wasserman wrote, "The trial of the Seabrook ten made it clear… that the stakes were going to be very high in New Hampshire, and that somebody was taking these protests very seriously."[62] After the trial, the Clamshell decided to buy time and cancelled the next planned occupation for October 23, holding a small, legal energy fair instead.[63] Members of the Clamshell Alliance now bunkered down for the winter and began organizing for their third and biggest occupation the following spring. The floodgates were to be removed and activists from all over New England actively encouraged to join the Clamshell. Meanwhile, Governor Meldrim Thomson likewise prepared for what promised to be a major showdown the following spring.

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[59] *Ibid.* 58.

[60] *Ibid.* 58.

[61] *Ibid.* 58.

[62] *Ibid.* 58.

[63] *Ibid.* 58.

"The Mississippi of the North": Meldrim Thomson and New Hampshire Politics

New Hampshire had long been the most conservative of the six New England states. With its state motto, "Live Free or Die", New Hampshire voters were renown for their independent, small-government conservatism and opposition to almost any form of taxation (the state had no sales or income tax.) New Hampshire's limited tax-base was partly responsible for the state's relatively underdeveloped infrastructure compared to its neighbors, especially Massachusetts to the south. For many New Hampshirites, this situation merely preserved the state's rustic New England charm. Many New Hampshirites harbored a particular disdain for Massachusetts, especially the greater Boston area, which they regarded as a pro-labor bastion of "big government" and cosmopolitan liberalism.[64] Nevertheless, New Hampshire's electorate also had a well-earned reputation for unpredictability and independence, most dramatically underscored in the 1968 Democratic primary when antiwar candidate Eugene McCarthy nearly outpolled the incumbent president Lyndon Johnson.[65] Southeastern New Hampshire, where Seabrook was located was within the greater Boston media area. It represented the most liberal section of New Hampshire; however, by Massachusetts' standards, even this part of New Hampshire was relatively conservative.[66]

The symbol of New Hampshire conservatism in the 1970s was Republican Governor Meldrim Thomson who had won the governorship in 1972 on a strongly anti-

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[64] Bedford, 5-6.

[65] Charles Kaiser, 1968 in America: Music, Politics, Chaos, Counterculture and a Generation (New York: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988), 90-1.

[66] Bedford, 5-6.

tax platform. Raised in Georgia, Thomson made his profession in the publishing industry, eventually settling down in the Granite State. According to Harvey Wasserman, Thomson ran the state like "his personal fief".[67] Historian Charles Bedford, in his study, Seabrook Nuclear Power Station: Citizen Politics and Nuclear Power, writes, "Governor Thomson [believed] no problem had two sides and... relished his bull-in-a-china-shop image..."[68] Throughout the 1970s, Thomson had sought to bolster his conservative reputation for a national audience in anticipation of a possible run for the presidential nomination in the 1980 Republican primaries, where he hoped to run to the right of Ronald Reagan. To that end, Thomson had visited the Republic of South Africa and lauded its racial policies and ordered all state flags lowered to half-mast when Taiwan was ejected from the Olympics in favor of the People's Republic of China.[69] Thomson was one of the nation's most outspoken political advocates of nuclear power and saw the completion of the Seabrook Nuclear Power Station as a personal crusade. As governor he ordered a "gag rule" put in place, forbidding any state employee from expressing public criticism of the Seabrook project. When a suspiciously large number of local Clamshell supporters in the Seabrook area reported various forms of harassment, many believed it was part of Thomson's pro-nuclear crusade. According to Harvey Wasserman, "Thomson's hand had already been evident throughout the town. Tax assessments for local nuclear opponents had jumped far higher than those who supported the plant. Known Clamshell sympathizers found themselves with zoning hassles,

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[67] Wasserman, "Opening Battles of the Eighties", Mother Jones, August 1977; Wasserman, "Power at the Polls", Valley Advocate, December 6, 1978; both reprinted in Energy War: Reports from the Front, 80 and 123.

[68] Beford, 21.

[69] Wasserman, "Resistance Gets Ready for the Spring", The Nation, February 11, 1978; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 111.

threatening phone calls, tax problems, and an escalating atmosphere of intimidation and potential violence."[70]

Thomson's firm grip on the apparatus of state power was augmented by his close alliance with William Loeb, the archconservative publisher of the Manchester Union Leader, an outlet for ideological conservatism read by many conservatives nationally. Loeb used his newspaper as a booster for the Seabrook nuclear plants and as a mouthpiece for Thomson to denounce the Clamshell Alliance. Throughout the struggle over the Seabrook nuclear plants, Thomson accused the movement of being run exclusively by "outsiders" and employed polemical invectives reminiscent of Spiro Agnew in the late-1960s. He referred to Clamshell activists as "a filthy, foul, un-American minority… a gurgling, spurting bunch of unproductive individuals…"[71] Thus, as the May 1, 1977 date approached for what clearly would be the largest of the Clams' site occupations, both the Alliance and the governor hoped to use the event to address a national audience. Each became the other's perfect *bete noir*. As the showdown approached, tensions escalated. In an article for The Nation, Harvey Wasserman wrote, "Together Thomson and Loeb used the week prior to the [spring 1977] occupation to create an environment absent from this country since the days of Vietnam …[l]abelling alliance members 'communists', 'perverts'… and a 'cover for terrorism.'"[72] Governor Thomson seemed prepared to wield the full weight of state power against the Clamshell Alliance. The degree to which he did shocked even his most ardent detractors.

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[70] *Ibid.* 112.

[71] *Ibid.* 111.

[72] Wasserman, "High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response", The Nation, June 18, 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 70.

Showdown: "The Battle of Seabrook": May, 1977

In the days leading up to the April 30-May 1 occupation, the Clamshell Alliance held workshops on non-violence and passive resistance in churches and classrooms throughout New England. Those who planned on committing civil disobedience met with members of their affinity groups with whom they would need to stay in contact throughout the action. The Clamshell Alliance distributed a "Handbook for Occupiers" to all planning civil disobedience, which instructed them to bring food, blankets, and medicine. Many occupiers arrived with lawyers' phone numbers inked onto their hands. Several local Seabrook residents, including the Santasuccis, opened up their land to the Clams, where up to 500 congregated and camped out in preparation for the next day's occupation. Massachusetts Quakers opened up meeting houses as weigh-stations near the New Hampshire border where a large number of western Massachusetts Clams spent the night before the action. Clamshell activists car-pooled and chartered buses that streamed into the Seabrook area, many from Boston area and western Massachusetts colleges.[73] Others came from as far away as Connecticut and Rhode Island, and some from as far away as New York City. Signs all over the Seabrook area reading "Welcome Clams" greeted them. The atmosphere was one of excitement and anticipation as the preparations took on the air of a large-scale, non-violent military campaign. To New York Times reporter John Kifner, Harvey Wasserman declared, "This will be our Bunker Hill – the first serious resistance."[74]

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[73] *Ibid.* 69.

[74] New York Times, April 30, 1977.

Vince O'Connor drove to Seabrook in a large vehicle with a group of younger college students from Amherst and a pacifist deserter from the Czechoslovakian military who had swum across a river to Austria and defected. O'Connor had attended San Francisco University, a Jesuit school and was a SNCC organizer in Arkansas in the mid-1960s. O'Connor later became active in the San Francisco War Resisters League where he got to know Randy Kehler, and later spent eighteen months in prison for refusing induction into the military. As with many affinity groups that trained and traveled together to Seabrook, a strong esprit de corps quickly developed. The group shared stories and sang. The older, veteran activists shared stories of the U.S. civil rights struggle and escaping a communist nation. O'Connor warned the younger activists that despite the thorough organizing, things could get unpredictable:

> I told people, "Look, this could be dangerous, the governor is a nut, the police have guns..." I told them stories of Mississippi about how this one woman said, "No one should come to the South unless you're prepared to die"... You don't want to tell people "Don't worry about it, it's completely cool, there's no problem here when in fact that's not the truth, so I said, "This could get pretty dangerous."[75]

Despite bellicose rhetoric from the governor and fears of official violence, the police hoped to avoid conflict. The Clamshell Alliance likewise sought to establish cordial relations with the local police. Two days before the occupation, Clamshell organizers met with Colonel Paul Doyon, who would be in charge of the police during the occupation, and informed him of their plans. The Clams emphasized to Doyan their full intention to remain non-violent. Relations between the Clamshell and the police, as

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[75] Interview with Vincent O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

well as the New Hampshire National Guard, would generally remain peaceful throughout the event.[76]

Also two days prior to the occupation, a small delegation of Clams succeeded in gaining a personal audience with Governor Thomson, who had referred to the Clams as everything from "sexual deviants" to "terrorists". The meeting produced very little, but some in the delegation believed they saw a slight softening on the part of Thomson. Two Clams, Kathy Wolff and Robin Read, emerged from the meeting upbeat, stating, "I think the meeting blew the governor's mind. He suddenly had to confront the fact that we are also human beings, and that we were, in fact, committed to non-violence."[77] Such congeniality would prove short-lived, however, as the governor would oversee the state response to the occupation very much as a general commanding his troupes. Furthermore, the Loeb press went into overdrive villainizing the Clams. One cartoon in the Manchester Union Leader depicted an invading army of clams, each with a hammer and sickle on its shell. On April 29, the paper's headline read, "Leftist groups hope for violence."[78]

On the afternoon of April 30, 1977, the Clams converged on the Seabrook site from three main staging areas. Most arrived by land, but some were ferried to the site on boats by local lobstermen who were among the strongest local supporters of the movement, believing the nuclear plants threatened their livelihood. Over 2,000 activists -- not all of who stayed to be arrested -- and over 200 members of the press and media,

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[76] Wasserman. "High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response", The Nation, June 18, 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 70.

[77] *Ibid.* 70.

[78] Manchester Union Leader, April 29, 1977.

poured onto the site. Col. Doyan had decided to let the Clams enter the property rather than block them at the site's periphery, for fear of violence which might have spilled onto the streets, especially the main highway into Seabrook, Route 1.[79] Describing the scene sometime later, Harvey Wasserman wrote, "There was an air of good feeling and self-assurance among both the police and occupiers that made events seem more like a ballet than a traditional political confrontation."[80]

Hampshire College graduate Robbie Leppzer captured the event in his documentary, Seabrook 1977. Leppzer's footage shows hundreds upon hundreds of Clam activists peacefully strolling onto the site. Although older white-haired Quakers such as B Elizabeth Boardman and Frances Crowe, and others of conventional dress are seen in the footage, on first sight one could easily think one was watching Woodstock footage from 1969. The overwhelmingly countercultural nature of the movement becomes abundantly clear in the documentary. One sees waves of activists with long hair, tie-died shirts, sandals and other accoutrements of the counterculture backpacking onto the site. The occupiers appear determined and in good spirits, with a good deal of camaraderie in evidence. The Clamshell Alliance emphasized that protestors must not bring any drugs or intoxicants onto the site, a stricture that by all accounts was enthusiastically respected.[81]

John Kifner of The New York Times wrote, "The demonstrators intended to set up a camp site on the grounds modeling their action after a demonstration in western

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[79] Time, May 16, 1977, 59; Wasserman, "High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response", The Nation, June 18, 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 70.

[80] Joppke, 80.

[81] Seabrook: 1977,16 mm, 86 min. Turning Tide Productions, 1978.

Germany [Wyhl] in which protestors seized a plant site and stopped construction of a nuclear plant."[82] Once on the site, the occupiers dug in, pitching tent, setting up latrines and creating what amounted to a small village on the Seabrook site, which the Clams took to calling "Occupation City".[83] Occupiers clustered with their affinity groups and several distinct "neighborhoods" took shape. As Robbie Leppzer captured the event on film for posterity, Harvey Wasserman was again on hand, in his dual role of activist and journalist, covering the event for The Nation. Wasserman described the scene:

> While most of the occupiers went about the business of living, a more or less permanent conclave of elected representatives took root at the southwest corner of the campsite. Among other things, this decision-making body passed ordinances against the construction of nuclear power plants or the transportation of radioactive materials within "town" limits. It also sent messages of solidarity to the workers and environmentalists of the world, and the 3,000 person rally being held across the marsh at the Hampton Beach State Park by Concerned Citizens of Seabrook and Hampton Falls, an organization of local people opposed to the plant.[84]

The police decided to allow the occupiers to camp out and make the arrests the following day, May 1 ("May Day"). The occupation was far larger than Governor Thomson had anticipated and beyond the capacity of the 140 New Hampshire state troopers to handle. On May 1, the governor called up New Hampshire's National Guard, which converged on the Seabrook site with scores of buses for the mass arrests.[85] Still, New Hampshire's recourses were not enough. Declaring a "state of emergency", Governor Thomson put out a call to all New England governors for police back up. All of New England's governors complied, dispatching a total of 65 state police to

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[82] New York Times, May 1, 1977.

[83] *Ibid.* Wasserman, "High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response", The Nation, June 18, 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 71.

[84] Ibid., 71.

[85] *Ibid.*, 71-4.

Seabrook, with one notable and conspicuous exception, Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis. Elected in 1974 as an unabashed liberal reformer, Dukakis was the antithesis of New Hampshire's openly reactionary governor. Both governors made little secret of the contempt with which they held the other. In response to Governor Thomson's call for police assistance from Massachusetts, Dukakis declared that there was no threat to public order and he would thereby refuse to send Massachusetts state police to New Hampshire.[86] (In the 1980s, Dukakis would likewise refuse to send Massachusetts National Guard on military maneuvers in Honduras.) Dukakis was no doubt mindful of the numerous Massachusetts activists camped out at Seabrook whose support he would court in his bid for re-election the following year. Further, although Dukakis never advocated dismantling existing nuclear plants in Massachusetts, he had become unenthusiastic about nuclear energy, declaring, "I don't view nuclear as a particularly promising or desirable source of energy for the nation and for New England in the future. Given both the environmental problems and also the cost problems, I don't see much of a future for nuclear in the energy picture for this country. I think alternative sources are where we ought to be moving."[87] (In the 1980s, the Bay State governor was more responsible than any single individual for delaying the Seabrook Nuclear Power Station from going on line.)[88]

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[86] *Ibid.* Bedford, 70.

[87] Wasserman, "Resistance Nears a Critical Mass", The Nation, October 8, 1977.

[88] Bedford, 157-8. Ironically, few antinuclear activists voted for Dukakis in 1974, opting instead for liberal Republican Francis Sargent who openly opposed nuclear power, unlike Dukakis who in the campaign gave qualified support for it. As for Dukakis's decision to withhold Massachusetts state police, O'Connell noted the numerous Massachusetts contingents at the site and observed, "Arresting your voters is not the coolest thing to do, especially if you don't have to do it." Interview, Vincent O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

As a virtual army of New Hampshire police, National Guard and police from Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut and Vermont amassed outside the nuclear plant site on May 1, Governor Thomson dramatically arrived by helicopter to take charge of his troops, with two American flags protruding prominently from his jacket pocket. The governor and Col. Doyan then met with six elected representatives from the Clamshell Alliance, including Elizabeth Boardman. The scene resembled opposing generals meeting on the middle of the field before battle. Col. Doyan greeted Bostonian Boardman, "How do you do, Elizabeth? Welcome to New Hampshire, although I wish it was in different circumstances." Doyan implored Boardman and the rest of the Clam delegation to call off the battle: "I would like to encourage you to call it a weekend." Boardman told the governor and Col. Doyan, "We are all mutually sorry. But our purpose was not simply to draw attention to the occupation and capture media attention but to stop all construction of the proposed power plant." Governor Thomson returned the politeness: "I doubt that I could persuade you and I doubt that you could persuade me, but that's America."[89] Col. Doyan appeared sympathetic according to those witnessing the scene, expressing regret at what he now was about to do. At approximately 3 p.m. Col. Doyan walked to the edge of "Occupation City" and over a loud speaker announced that those not immediately vacating the premises would be placed under arrest. After a brief interval to allow the few who did not wish to be arrested to leave, the arrests commenced with some occupiers going limp, as they had been trained at the pre-occupation seminars. Most walked to the waiting buses where they were photographed and identified. As the mass arrests got under way, one occupier

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[89] New York Times, May 2, 1977, 1 and 24; Also Richard Asinof. "No-Nukers Demonstrate Their Strength at Seabrook", Valley Advocate, May 11, 1977.

played "We Shall Overcome" on a bagpipe.[90] Wasserman described the scene for The Nation:

> The arrests proceeded smoothly, if slowly. Piling people onto chartered school buses and into National Guard troop carriers, the patrolmen took more than twelve hours to haul everyone away. Some of the occupiers who had packed up their gear in the afternoon unpacked it again and re-opened their tents to wait through the long hours of the night. Many were not arrested until dawn.[91]

In all 1,414 Clamshell activists were taken into custody, taxing New Hampshire's resources and infrastructure to the core. The occupiers were taken to National Guard armories at Concord, Manchester, Portsmouth, Dover and Somersworth. Some of those arrested were held for over twelve hours on the buses without access to toilets. Many supporters of those arrested despaired as they frantically tried to find out where their friends and relatives had been taken. Anna Gyorgy said, "It was a classic police-state situation… It was like 1,400 people had been 'disappeared' by the state."[92] The situation was chaotic. Many of those arrested went up to three days without being able to telephone outside supporters or their attorneys. Hundreds went as long as three days before being provided beds. Meanwhile, Governor Thomson helicoptered back and forth across New Hampshire, from the Seabrook plant site to the armories and to the courts where the first occupiers were being arraigned. Early on, arrestees at some sites were released on "personal recognizance" while at others some were being released on $100 bail. Apprised of this situation, Thomson helicoptered to the Hampton County District Court and ordered the clerk to put away all personal recognizance forms. Most releases

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[90] *Ibid.*

[91] Wasserman, "High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response", The Nation, June 18, 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 71.

[92] *Ibid.* 72.

stopped throughout the state.[93] Clearly, Governor Thomson believed detainment, which few Clams had expected to last more than a few days at most, would be a deterrent to future actions at Seabrook and would bolster his hard-line "law and order" reputation nationally. Most of those arrested eventually spent at least a week in National Guard armories and almost 1,000 would be held for two weeks. Bail, originally set at $100, seemed to rise arbitrarily, to $200 then to $500 (Thomson wanted $1,500) Application of the law was erratic throughout. To divide the movement, the state pursued a policy of allowing only New Hampshire residents out on personal recognizance, with the courts arguing that bail was necessary to make sure out-of-staters showed up for trial.[94] Those who had already posted $100 bond were told before they were released that the bail had just increased. One Clam activist exclaimed in exasperation, "At Portsmouth we were told we would be released on personal recognizance. Then it turned into $100. This morning it was $200 and this afternoon it's $500. What's next?"[95] Lawyers for the Clamshell Alliance charged the state with "punitive detention", arguing not only that the bail was excessive, but also unnecessary since all those arrested at previous Clamshell actions had in fact shown up on their court dates. Attorney Emmanuel Krasner complained, "It was a travesty. The state violated just about every right in the Constitution."[96] The ACLU soon launched an unsuccessful civil suite against Governor Thomson.[97]

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[93] *Ibid, 72;* New York Times, May 15, 1977. 17.

[94] *Ibid. 72.*

[95] *Ibid.* 74.

[96] *Ibid.* 72.

[97] *Ibid.* 74; New York Times, May 10, 1977, 14.

The detained activists at all the armories then embarked upon a course of "bail solidarity", collectively refusing to post bond and demanding to be released on personal recognizance. Thomson dug in his heels in what the New YorkTimes described as a "battle of wills."[98] Anna Gyorgy told one reporter, "It's Meldrim. It's showdown in Meldrimville."[99] The showdown quickly became the focus of national attention, receiving coverage from the major television networks, Time, Newsweek, the major American daily newspapers and the international press. To a national audience Governor Thomson declared, "We are winning the battle of Seabrook."[100] The governor was wrong. Each day the Clams were detained resulted in more press and media coverage, which became increasingly critical of the governor and sympathetic to the Clams. Remembered Vince O'Connor, "Meldrim Thomson was a lunatic and he played into our hands by arresting us, which was a terrible mistake on his part because it gave us enormous publicity and created solidarity among people that exists to this day."[101] Moreover, the imprisonment of the activists was costing $50,000 a day in a state with exceedingly low taxes. Rumblings of discontent emerged even among New Hampshirites unsympathetic to the Clamshell Alliance. (The Loeb press was a notable exception.) The commissioners of Rockingham County, whose courts would have to try all those arrested, openly denounced the governor and declared that not only would they refuse to shoulder the massive legal costs but would sue the governor if he tried to pass on the costs of the armory detentions to the county. (The costs of the arrests would soon

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[98] New York Times, May 5, 1977, 17.

[99] *Ibid.*

[100] Wasserman, "High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response", The Nation, June 18, 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 74.

[101] Interview with Vincent O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

be compounded by PSNH utility rate increases to pay for Seabrook's escalating "construction work in progress" costs, further infuriating New Hampshire's frugal voters. It would cost Meldrim Thomson his bid for re-election in 1978.)[102]

A few days into the detentions, Thomson sought to turn the huge costs to his advantage by portraying himself as a front-line defense against a radical antinuclear movement that threatened to sweep the country. Thomson put out a national call to "corporations, labor unions and rank-and-file citizens throughout America" to send contributions to defer the huge debt being incurred in New Hampshire. All Americans should know, declared Thomson, that "Our battle of today can become theirs tomorrow..."[103] State Attorney General David Souter (the future Supreme Court Justice) argued that if the Clams were released they would immediately re-occupy the site. Harvey Wasserman, whom much of the national press now to looked to for comment, described the governor's call for contributions as "a cheap publicity stunt" and Souter's fears of re-occupation as "absurd".[104]

Meanwhile, those detained in the armories replicated the communal democracy they had established at "Occupation City". Many sang on the site, while being arrested and when put in the armories. When faced with decisions the Clams met with their affinity groups, passing their groups' consensus on up to meetings of elected affinity group representatives. This was initially frustrating to police and National Guard who sought in vain for conventional "leaders' with whom to speak. Men and women were

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[102] Wasserman, "High Tension in the Energy Debates – The Clamshell Response", The Nation, June 18, 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 75; Wasserman, "People Against Power", The Progressive, April 1978.

[103] New York Times, May 7, 1977, 8.

[104] *Ibid.*

held in common in most of the armories. Although drugs and alcohol were absent throughout, many romances bloomed in the armories. In response, guards at the Manchester armory threatened to segregate the men and women, which would have broken up most of the affinity groups. Near rebellion broke out upon news of this. In an interview with Barbara Epstein some years later, Boardman described the Guard pulling her aside and confronting her about the *liaisons, which* were taking place. Boardman recounted, "It was evidently my role as an older woman to be shocked about this. I said… 'If you separate us from our affinity groups, we are not going to be responsible for what hell breaks loose.'"[105] The Guard relented so long as barriers were erected for couples. A similar move to segregate males and females at the Portsmouth armory was also abandoned after the detainees all tied their shoelaces together and piled their shoes in the middle of the armory. Other armories like Concord, however, did segregate men and women.[106] O'Connor recalled this was something of a joke among the gay and lesbian friendly movement, stating, "They separated men and women but they didn't quite get the idea that that might not accomplish their goal of suppressing sexual activities…"[107]

Over time, many Clamshell detainees worked to forge positive relations with the National Guard and to sound them out on their views of nuclear power. Rennie Cushing, a highly visible local Clam, recalled, "We treated them [the National Guard] like fellow human beings. A lot of the Guard was against the nukes to begin with, and a lot more

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[105] Epstein, 68.

[106] New York Times, May 9, 1977, 18.

[107] Interview with Vincent O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

were against it by the time the occupation was over."[108] The New York Times described relations between the Clams and the National Guard as "strikingly cordial".[109]

One poignant story recalled by O'Connor occurred in the Concord armory on the May 4 anniversary of the killings at Kent State:

> The real dramatic moment was on May 4… [it was]the anniversary of the killings at Kent State and so people decided we were gonna hold hands around the armory, circle the armory and have some minutes of silence, ten or fifteen. We did it and the [National Guard] who were cooking kept making noises… and the silence just became overpowering, people didn't tell them to "Shish", we said "We're doing our thing, we'll let them do what they think is appropriate", and of course who killed the people at Kent State but the National Guard? You know, this is who is taking care of us. So finally everything stopped, no one made any noise throughout the last few minutes, it was very remarkable. Then someone sang us out of it with the Holly Neir song "It Could Have Been Me".[110]

The intimacy was stronger in smaller armories, such as Concord, than Manchester, the largest, which held over 600 people. Recalled O'Connor, "[E]veryone could know each other [at] Concord… it had 200 people in it and I mean you could know everybody by sight and feel comfortable with them…"[111] Beyond meeting with their affinity groups and fraternizing with the Guard, many Clams held informal seminars on various topics, grouped to sing, met in small prayer groups or read to pass the time. On the few occasions the Clams were allowed outside, games of Frisbee, soccer and jumping on makeshift trampolines passed the time. Talent shows were held in some of the armories. At Portsmouth, some Clams found and prominently displayed a National Guard sign that read, "As a prisoner I will keep faith with my fellow

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[108] Wasserman, "High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response", The Nation, June 18, 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 74-5.

[109] New York Times, May 9, 1977, 18.

[110] Interview with Vincent O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

[111] *Ibid.*

prisoners."[112] O'Connor observed, "Jails are the university of the revolution, you just created four universities at Manchester, Concord, Dover, etc." [113] Many Clams would later remember this time as the golden age of the Clamshell Alliance, a time of "euphoria" and "solidarity" that would be sorely missed a year later when the Clamshell factionalized. O'Connor said, "The atmosphere in the Concord armory was so good that people stayed there instead of going back to school, like 'this is the first place in the real world I feel comfortable outside my family.'"[114]

Many attributed the spirit of mutuality and unity to what Clam activist Richard Asinof, writing for the Valley Advocate described as "the strong impact that women in key leadership roles exerted on the events."[115] Among the leading women in the movement were Elizabeth Boardman, Suki Rice, and Anna Gyorgy. Kathy Wolff became co-spokesperson for the movement. Although at first she found that the mostly male reporters instinctively went to Harvey Wasserman, Wolff asserted herself and took on a more visible role. Wolff asserted that the Clams' good feelings and unity was largely due to the role women played in forging a new politics that departed from the machismo of the late 1960s antiwar movement. "Women have been important in holding the Clamshell together between actions," she said. Women helped the movement transcend male egotism, what Wolff called the "my dog's bigger than your dog" syndrome. "That tone is set when you must be competitive. Women have helped the men

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[112] New York Times., *May 9, 1977, 18.*

[113] Interview with Vincent O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

[114] *Ibid.*

[115] Richard Asinof, "No-Nukers Demonstrate Their Strength at Seabrook", Valley Advocate, May 11, 1977.

get over this hurdle in the movement."[116] Describing this women directed movement, Asinof wrote of the planning for the occupation:

> There was very little ego battling in the decision-making bodies, hardly any of the typical behavior associated with academics, bureaucrats and radical groups, of people speaking just to listen to themselves talk. When Sam Lovejoy started monopolizing the phone and information at Clamshell headquarters, he was quickly banished for the next day at the Portsmouth office.[117]

Clamshell women further sought to make the connections between the antinuclear movement and feminism. Anna Gyorgy and Nesta King, a doctoral candidate in feminism and ecology, at one Clam gathering, conducted a seminar on "Women and Energy", which they described in the program: "The connections between feminism and stopping nuclear power. Why the issue is relevant to women. Nuclear power as a manifestation of male domination and exploitation of the earth. Women's concerns as bearers of future generations."[118]

Despite the high spirits and camaraderie between men and women in the armories, concerns arose. As the detentions dragged on, lawyers for the Clamshell Alliance worried aloud about health conditions in the armories, taking their case for release to federal court where they described the armories as "ideal for transmission of epidemic diseases." They were unsuccessful. A slow stream of Clam activists trickled out of the armories, paying their bail so that they could return to their jobs or college final exams. By May 10, however, there were still 737 Clam detainees in New

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[116] *Ibid.*

[117] *Ibid* .Lovejoy ran into trouble dominating meetings during the Montague protests as well, on one occasion being asked to stop repeating points made by women in the group. Telephone interview with Vince O'Connor, April 3, 2003.

[118] "Turning Tide: The Time for Safe, Local and Renewable Energy Has Come", Program, *circa* 1977-1978. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

Hampshire's armories.[119] Finally, after two weeks of detention, Rockingham County prosecutor Carlton Eldridge entered into negotiations with the remaining detained Clamshell activists. Eldridge offered to release the Clamshell detainees on personal recognizance in exchange for mass trials, which would save the county enormous expense. Breaking into their affinity groups, the detainees at the Somersworth, Dover and Portsmouth armories accepted the deal; however, objections arose at the Manchester and Concord armories, forcing the Clams and Eldridge back into negotiation. The dissenting Clams demanded that some of the detainees receive public trials and at least one jury trial (this would allow the Clams to attempt to put nuclear energy on trial in a public forum as Sam Lovejoy had done in western Massachusetts). They also demanded refunds for those who had already bailed out. With the prolonged detentions causing national embarrassment for the state, and with the spiraling costs of the mass detainment, Eldridge agreed to most of the Clams demands. The detained Clams finally approved the deal on May 13. The processing and release of the last 541 detained Clams went on through the night, taking over fourteen hours, but by May 14, two weeks after the occupation began, all the Clamshell occupiers were now free.[120] Commenting on the deal, Clam negotiator Charles Light declared, "… I guess the weight of all those people was just too much for the state to carry."[121] As O'Connor recalled, "The meter was running [and] they just couldn't handle the bills."[122]

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[119] New York Times, May 10, 1977, 14.

[120] Wasserman, "High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response", The Nation, June 18, 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 75.

[121] *Ibid.*

[122] Interview with Vincent O'Connor, May 13, 2003.

Six months later, in November, 1977, the public trials demanded by the Clams commenced in Rockingham County Superior Court. By the agreement sixty-four Clam activists were to be given public trials. Twenty-six year old Carter Wentworth, an artist from Kensington, not far from Seabrook, was the focus of the jury trial. Wentworth was represented by Boston attorney Eric Blumenson. On Wentworth's behalf, Blumenson announced he would employ a "competing harms" defense similar to the "necessity defense" used by Sam Lovejoy in 1974. Also like Lovejoy, the defense stated that it would call experts on nuclear energy and civil disobedience such as Dr. Helen Caldicott and Boston University historian Howard Zinn, in an attempt to "put the nuclear industry on trial". Presiding judge Wayne Mullavey denied both motions.[123] Wentworth sought to persuade the jury of three men and three women of the necessity of occupying the site to protect others from the potential harm of nuclear energy: "I went to Seabrook to protect my life and my neighbors' lives… I was acting under the freedoms given to us in our Constitution and the Declaration of Independence."[124] With instructions to ignore the "competing harms" defense from Judge Mullavey, the jury declared Wentworth "guilty". The county prosecutor then asked the judge to pass down a sentence of 15 days and a fine of $100. Surprising even the prosecution, Judge Mullavey passed down a sentence of four months in prison. Describing the occupation of April 30 as a "mob action" and mindful of Clamshell planning for another occupation in the spring of 1978, Mullavey proclaimed, "This is one of the few cases since I've been on the bench in which

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[123] Harvey Wasserman, "Resistance Gets Set for the Spring", The Nation, February 11, 1978; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 103-4.

[124] *Ibid.* 104.

sentencing may serve as a deterrent to future crimes of this type."[125] As the other public trials plodded along, similar sentences of three to four months were meted out. The sentences were far longer than those usually given in New Hampshire courts for "criminal trespass". Meanwhile, the mass trials of the vast majority of the occupiers, agreed to in the May 13 accord, were so long delayed that charges were eventually dropped. Some speculated that the uneven sentencing, like the early distinctions made between New Hampshire and out-of-state Clams, was intended to drive a wedge into the movement.[126]

In mid-May of 1977, however, the Clamshell Alliance was ignorant of the harsh sentences that lay down the road for a fraction of the occupiers. The mood upon the release of the last detainees was euphoric and Clamshell activists felt a growing sense of momentum that they hoped would snowball not only in New England but nationally and internationally. Harvey Wasserman sought to sum up the impact of the April-May action for readers of The Nation:

> If the occupation proved the antinuclear movement had reached a new level of maturity and mass appeal, it also seemed a powerful testament to the tactics of non-violence. For the third time the Clamshell Alliance had staged a mass civil disobedience action without a single incidence of violence or serious bodily harm. The tactics of peaceful action had opened the gates to the site when any other approach seemed certain to have kept them closed. It also maintained for the occupation an overwhelming base of credibility and popular support against which the Thomson administration was simply unable to respond.[127]

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[125] *Ibid*, 104.

[126] *Ibid*, 104-5.

[127] Wasserman, "High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response", The Nation, June 18, 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 76.

The Clamshell Alliance had indeed grown dramatically within the short space of one year. The April-May action had successfully linked nuclear power at Seabrook to a growing nuclear debate nationally by generating a great deal of national press and media coverage, much of it sympathetic. (Nevertheless many Clams repeatedly complained that most press and media coverage focused on the arrests and detainments without delving into the underlying dangers of nuclear energy, which had prompted so many to risk so much by occupying the Seabrook site.) The direct –action militancy of the Clamshell Alliance now became a model for new antinuclear groups which began emerging around the country, such as the Abalone Alliance (California), the Palmetto Alliance (South Carolina), the Oyster Shell Alliance (Louisiana), the Crabshell Alliance (Washington) and the Conch Shell Alliance (Florida).[128] With the immense publicity the Clamshell had achieved and with a growing sense of momentum, there was no doubt that the organization would continue its exponential growth. Looking ahead, Wasserman wrote:

> Now, in the wake of its third tenfold increase in size, the alliance faces a critical period. Direct-action environmentalism has clearly accelerated from a small assembly of local groups to a full-scale movement, and with that must inevitably come all the growing pains of factionalism and organizational strain.[129]

Wasserman's forecast would prove far more accurate in 1978 than he realized, as the Clamshell Alliance increasingly became divided over goals and strategy, with two major factions emerging, "Soft Clams" and the smaller, more militant "Hard Clams". But before the Clamshell had to deal with dissension within its own ranks, it braced for a major pro-nuclear counter-offensive.

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[128] Newsweek, June 5, 1978.

[129] Wasserman, "High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response", The Nation, June 18, 1977.

Corporate-Labor Pro-Nuclear Counteroffensive

In the fall elections of 1976, environmental activists had put antinuclear initiatives on the ballot in six states. The initiatives did not seek to ban nuclear energy outright but rather sought to establish requirements for nuclear waste disposal, added safety requirements, or the empowerment of state legislatures to regulate the nuclear industry. Many of these ballot initiatives were complex, but all would have in affect put serious brakes on the nuclear industry's growth. The most contested was Proposition 15 in the state of California, which would have given the California legislature wide ranging powers to set standards for the nuclear industry, or impose a nuclear moratorium if it chose. The California campaign was representative of the many ballot initiatives that year in which environmentalists were heavily outspent by the nuclear industry. Since the initiative was complex, the nuclear industry worked to further obfuscate the issue by urging voters, "If you're confused, vote no."[130] But what ultimately worked most to defeat the ballot initiative was a massive pro-nuclear campaign by organized labor that was closely coordinated with the nuclear industry. Organized labor fanned out across California, making arguments similar to those used by George O'Brien in the 1974 western Massachusetts referenda debate. When the California antinuclear initiative was defeated, a representative for California's PSE & G gave most of the credit to the work done by California workers: "The very fact of the visibility of neighborhood campaign workers in so many communities acted as an offset to the 'it's the little people *vs.* the

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[130] Joppke, 66-7; Thomas R. Wellock, Critical Masses: Opposition to Nuclear Power in California, 1958-1978 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 72 and 147; Harvey Wasserman, "New Battle Looms in Nuclear Controversy", Valley Advocate, November 17, 1976.

giant corporations' argument being used by the proponents [of the antinuclear initiative]."[131]

In New England, the corporate-labor alliance was once again mobilized, this time against the Clamshell Alliance. New Hampshire's PSNH, the largest shareholder in the Seabrook nuclear project, organized a putative citizens' group called "New Hampshire Voice of Energy", which, though largely funded by the utility company, sought to put organized labor front and center. George O'Brien, along with scores of New England labor leaders, attended a "New England Nuclear Advocates Workshop" in early 1977, where attendees were instructed how to make the case for nuclear power in television interviews and debates ("When asked a tough question, ask, 'Are you sure of your facts?'"; "Try to end on an upbeat note"; "Never apologize on the air.")[132] As the Seabrook struggle heated up, O'Brien again took up the pro-nuclear cause. At a locally televised debate at Hampshire College in western Massachusetts, O'Brien sought to highlight what he saw as the hypocrisy of the Clamshell Alliance:

> How many gallons of fuel were wasted on the trip to Seabrook to protest and demonstrate? Surely, everyone didn't walk to Seabrook. How much fuel was used to light the armories and courtrooms in Manchester? How much fuel was used to police and transport the demonstrators from Seabrook to Manchester? Who's kidding who when they urge conservation fuel?[133]

A few weeks after the last Seabrook detainees were released, New Hampshire Voice of Energy staged what Harvey Wasserman himself described as "the nation's largest pro-nuclear rally." Over 3,000 workers from New England, and some from as far

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[131] Joppke, 67.

[132] George O'Brien, Notes from Northeast Nuclear Advocates Workshop, circa 1977, Box 6, Folder 83, IBEW.

[133] George O'Brien, Notes, September 9, 1977, Box 7, Folder 97, IBEW.

south as Philadelphia and New Jersey, held a boisterous rally for nuclear power in Manchester's JFK Arena. Many took up the chant, "Nukes! Nukes! Nukes!" and others held banners reading, "Nuclear Power: The Pollution Solution" and "Nuclear Power: Safer than Sex". Many in attendance wore hardhats as they listened to Governor Meldrim Thomson praise them as "good Americans [who] came together, obeyed the law, and made your point. You're much better than what I saw May first. By comparison, you're beautiful."[134] Also speaking was MIT professor Norman Rasmussen, who had conducted a report for the AEC in the early 1970s, which concluded that the likelihood of a nuclear catastrophe was negligible (the report was hotly contested by other, more skeptical scientists.) To cheers, Rasmussen denounced Clamshell activists as "irrational and illogical". Conservative Massachusetts Democrat Ed King (soon to defeat Michael Dukakis in his bid for re-nomination in the 1978 Democratic primary) proclaimed, "This really is the death struggle against the no-growth advocates."[135] Looking back, Wasserman observed, "The demonstration underscored ongoing support for the Seabrook project, and further reminded antinuclear organizers of the urgency of building ties with the union movement."[136]

Harvey Wasserman joined a growing number of national environmentalists who sought to forge ties between the antinuclear movement and organized labor. Wasserman became active in Environmentalists for Full Employment, which sought to mobilize environmentalists behind labor actions such as "Full Employment Week", and got the

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[134] Harvey Wasserman, "The Lyndon Johnson of the Seventies", Valley Advocate, June 29, 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 88-9.

[135] *Ibid.* 88-9.

[136] *Ibid.* 88-9.

support of some unions for pro-solar "Sun Day" celebrations in 1978.[137] The Clamshell Alliance itself had worked to win support from labor. In a Clam newsletter entitled "Workers, Energy and Jobs", the Clams quoted the United Auto Workers Leo Goodman, who had campaigned against a Detroit nuclear plant in the 1950s and continued to oppose nuclear energy in the 1970s: "There is no ecology-job conflict. We must have a common goal to improve the quality of life. It is our right, not a privilege, to have meaningful, safe and healthy jobs." The newsletter also declared, "If ALL Federal buildings were required to use solar and conservation methods (400,000 federal buildings) look at all the jobs that would be created. WOULDN'T WORKERS AND UNIONS SUPPORT THAT?"[138] Antinuclear activists did forge some alliances with labor in the late 1970s. Sheet metal workers were enthusiastic about the prospects for solar energy, and more socially activist unions such as the UAW and the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union forged tenuous ties with the antinuclear movement. These, however, were the exception. At its 1976 convention, the AFL-CIO endorsed a strongly pro-nuclear platform and continued to make strenuous efforts to speed up the construction of nuclear plants throughout the 1970s.[139]

Cracks in the Clamshell: "Hard Clams", "Soft Clams", "Closet Clams"and the Debate Over a Fourth Occupation

The spring 1977 occupation had catapulted the Clamshell Alliance into the national spotlight and made the Seabrook nuclear plants a symbol of the nation's

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[137] Environmentalists for Full Employment Bulletin, July 27, 1977, Box 7, Folder 93, IBEW; New York Times, May 28, 1977; Joppke, 76.

[138] "Workers, Energy and Jobs", Clamshell Alliance Newsletter, *circa* 1977, Box 6, Folder 85, IBEW.

[139] Resolution Adopted by AFL-CIO Executive Council, May 4, 1977, Box 6, Folder 85, IBEW.

growing nuclear debate. In the months after the occupation, new recruits from throughout New England poured into the Clamshell Alliance. As the Clamshell sought to absorb the mass influx, it continued to hold legal demonstrations and prepare for the trials of those arrested at the April-May action. Up until the spring of 1977, the Clamshell Alliance was predominantly comprised of like-minded members and the slow consensus process plodded along smoothly. During the winter of 1977-78, however, as the Clams planned for a fourth occupation for the coming spring, tensions were growing both from without and from within the Alliance.

By the winter of 1977, the Clams increasingly found themselves entering a siege mentality. Numerous reports came to the fore of police infiltration, double-ringing telephones (indicating phone taps), and mysterious vehicles parked outside Clam meeting places which would pull out when approached and later turn out to have untraceable license plates.[140] Local Seabrook supporters of the Clamshell Alliance complained of property tax increases disproportionate to their neighbors' and frequent zoning hassles. Tony Santasucci and at least one other local Clam supporter complained of low-flying helicopters buzzing their home.[141] Compounding the sense of siege was increasingly bellicose rhetoric from Governor Thomson that made some in the movement fear he intended to turn Seabrook into "Chicago 1968" should the Clams go ahead with a fourth occupation. The potential for violence had escalated now that PSNH had fenced in most of the Seabrook nuclear construction site. Since the Clamshell

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[140] Wasserman. "Resistance Gets Set for the Spring", The Nation, February 11, 1978; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 112.

[141] Boston Globe, June 24, 1978.

Alliance had worked so hard to cultivate cordial relations with law enforcement, the prospects of violent confrontations with police and National Guard were unnerving.

The Clamshell's biggest problems, however, came from within. There were some in the Clamshell who seemed more interested in the movement for the sense of community it conveyed and as a vehicle through which to put their non-violent beliefs into practice than stopping construction of the Seabrook plants. These Clams seemed more attracted to the movement's form than its substance and often downplayed the importance of pragmatic tactical questions. Vince O'Connor observed a cleavage that sometimes emerged between the leadership and the rank-and-file: "People had been through enough organizations that they knew how organizations worked and they… were to accomplish goals; for some people, the first time around they're a way to express who you are…"[142] Was non-violence a lifestyle or tactic? Christian Joppke, in his comparative study of the U.S. and West German antinuclear movements, writes that for these Clams, "Opposing nuclear power was only the negative folio against which the movement project of empowerment and community building unfolded."[143] Writing for New Age in the fall of 1977, Harvey Wasserman sought to remind some in the movement that the goal of the non-violent strategy was to stop the nuclear plants from being built. After surveying the history of non-violent activism in U.S. history, Wasserman quotes Cesar Chavez, the labor organizer of Chicano grape pickers in the 1960s:

> If all you're interested in is going around being non-violent and so concerned about yourself, at some point the whole thing breaks down – and you say to yourself, "Well, let them be violent, as long as I'm non-

[142] Interview with Vincent O'Connor, May 13, 2003; see also Joppke, 79-80.

[143] *Ibid.* 79.

> violent." Or you begin to think it's okay to lose the battle as long as you remain non-violent. The idea is that you have to *win* and be non-violent. That's extremely important. What do the poor care about strange philosophies of non-violence if it doesn't mean bread for them?[144]

Of more concern than those who saw the movement as a way of life were those who now entered the movement and viewed the Clamshell Alliance as an instrument with which to launch a full, frontal assault on the capitalist state. Several small but highly organized and ideologically committed anarchist groups joined the Clamshell, turning their affinity groups into platforms to advocate much more militant action against the Seabrook plants. The anarchist groups were based mostly in Cambridge, particularly MIT, but enjoyed support from some of the more radical antinuclear activists in Vermont. Groups such as "Black Rose" and "Hard Rain" introduced a sectarian style into the Boston Clamshell alien to the group's early spirit. Hard Rain and Black Rose believed the Clamshell had to embrace a more openly radical critique of the corporate state, and adopt more militant strategies to shut the Seabrook plants down. The anarchist groups were the most visible members of those now calling themselves "Hard Clams" or the "Action Faction". These Clams had nothing but contempt for what they saw as a *bourgeois* fetishism for symbolic non-violence in the movement, which they believed alienated the predominantly white, middle class movement from the working class. Rather than occupy the Seabrook site to generate publicity and elevate the national debate on nuclear power, the "Hard Clams" argued vociferously that, as in Europe, the movement needed to move in the direction of making it physically impossible for the plants to ever go online. Black Rose, Hard Rain and the other "Hard Clams" they appealed to, in many ways, sought to radicalize the Clamshell in much the same way as

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[144] Harvey Wasserman, "The Power of the People: Active Non-Violence in the United States", New Age, September 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 99.

SDS had worked to radicalize the antiwar movement in the late 1960s and as West German leftists were then doing with the antinuclear movement across the Atlantic.[145]

The influx of these new groups dramatically altered the dynamics of the Clamshell Alliance, making consensus increasingly difficult as the Clams planned the fourth occupation. One question now became the fulcrum upon which the divisions in the Alliance pivoted: Since the Seabrook site was fenced in, should the Clams employ fence-cutting to gain entrance to the site? From its inception, the Clamshell's principles stated that destruction of property was not consistent with non-violence. Some Clams stuck rigidly to this principle and declared they would take no part in fence cutting. Some, who supported Sam Lovejoy's tower toppling in Montague, believed fence cutting would be different than toppling the tower by night since it would lead to a direct confrontation with police. The Clamshell's core organizers believed they could attract between 3,000 and 5,000 occupiers to any fourth occupation; however, the bellicose threats coming from New Hampshire caused many to fear the consequences of another occupation.[146]

The Hard Clams' calls for fence cutting and a forced entry of the construction site put the Alliance on a collision course with a state government prepared to marshal all its resources, and a governor who now refused to rule out lethal force. Governor Thomson still smarted from the 1977 occupation that had cost the state $50,000 a day and generated widespread sympathy for the Clamshell Alliance. Now the Clams threatened to compound the cost to the state by scheduling the late June occupation for

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[145] Epstein, 68-75; 80-84.

[146] *Ibid.* 68-75, 80-4; Wasserman, "Resistance Gets Set for the Spring", The Nation, February 11, 1978; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 105-110.

the kick-off of the summer tourist season. Thomas Rath, New Hampshire's attorney general argued the line had to be drawn. "Seabrook is becoming the spring thing to do", Rath sighed, and threatened the use of Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) police.[147] SWAT units had been created in the late 1960s to combat revolutionary leftists, but had fallen out of popularity until 1977 when, according to one SWAT member, they were "being reactivated because of growing fear that our country may be subject to terrorist organizations and Seabrook-like demonstrations."[148] Rockingham County district attorney Carlton Eldridge went even further: "Let's just say that we will make their visit to our county as uncomfortable as possible... The governor has said the same thing. We will use whatever force options we have, from nothing to bullets. Non-violent arrests aren't the only thing in our arsenal. How far are we willing to go? Far."[149] The governor threatened fire hoses and dogs, and declared that he was willing to close the Massachusetts-New Hampshire border and declare martial law. "I have never used this power before and I hope I don't have to use it for this demonstration," warned Thomson.[150]

On top of the state, private right-wing groups in New Hampshire threatened violence. At one small but vociferous anti-Clam rally, pro-nuclear protestors held signs such as "Clams Should be Steamed and Not Heard" and "Clamshell Alliance Are a Bunch of Jewish-Communist Hypocrite Stooges".[151] A leader of a right wing militia-

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[147] "Seabrook: Another Kent State?", Valley Advocate, June 14, 1978, 10.

[148] *Ibid.*, 17.

[149] *Ibid.*, 14.

[150] *Ibid.*, 14.

[151] "Seabrook Protest Largest Anti-Nuke Rally in the U.S.", Valley Advocate, July 5, 1978, cover.

type group called the Continental Line boasted, "We want the Clamshell to know we have infiltrated them and are taking notes."[152] Sam Lovejoy responded to the threats, "Sounds like more of the violent talk that is only provocative and self-serving on the part of the state. Violence will be the fault of the police or provocateurs outside the Clamshell. The biggest wild card is the right wing and construction trades folks, and it doesn't take many of them."[153]

With the militancy of the Hard Clams and preparations for martial law by the state threatening to turn their hometown into a war zone, local sympathizers of the Clamshell began withdrawing their support for the occupation, including use of their properties as staging grounds. Since many in the movement believed local support conferred legitimacy on the Alliance and was crucial logistically, anything like fence cutting and a forced occupation that jeopardized that support was anathema.[154]

At Boston Clamshell meetings, Black Rose and Hard Rain continued to argue strenuously for fence cutting and occupying the site *en masse*. These tactics, they pointed out, had been used extensively in the European antinuclear movement. Non-violent purists were aghast and many rank-and-file Clams overwhelmed by the "Hard Clams" stridency and use of anarchist theories. Those who had lived through the 1960s could recall how small sectarian groups like the Maoist Progressive Labor had mired down SDS in never ending sectarian debate. Harvey Wasserman described the heated Boston Clam meetings for WIN, a radical pacifist magazine associated with the War Resisters League:

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[152] "Seabrook: Another Kent State?", Valley Advocate, June 14, 1978, 14.

[153] *Ibid.*, 17.

[154] Epstein, 76; Wasserman, Energy War: Reports from the Front, 113.

> In Boston… unanimity became impossible. A small but dedicated faction within the Clamshell there found it necessary to continually block consensus on basic issues of non-violence, advocating cutting off fences and prolonging debate over basic guidelines of occupation behavior to the point where meaningful political action became virtually impossible. Repeatedly Clamshell members asked that the minority stand aside or form their own group, and repeatedly the "action faction" refused, pushing the issue until the moment it seemed they would finally be expelled, and then strategically stepping down to keep a toehold inside the Clamshell so they could fight again another day. It did not take long for Boston meetings to degenerate into unpleasant and unproductive debating matches, which debilitated much of Boston's organizing.[155]

Although Wasserman's description spoke for many, perhaps a majority of Clams, the Boston-based anarchists' arguments resonated with many other Clams, especially the further away from Seabrook one got. Many out-of-state Clams were anxious to occupy the site and believed the core, unofficial leadership, the "Soft Clams", was steering the movement into safe, mainstream waters. Charges of "sell out" and "lack of democracy" began to be heard at local Clam meetings outside the militants' Boston base. Many resented the high public profile of Wasserman, Anna Gyorgy, Sam Lovejoy, Kathy Wolff and New Hampshire Clams such as Rennie Cushing and Guy Chichester, charging them with "star tripping".[156] Although few "Hard Clams" outside of Boston subscribed to anarchist principles, Hard Rain and Black Rose's militancy and charges of movement "elitism" rang true for a growing number of Clam activists. Wasserman acknowledged these divisions, describing Clam meetings throughout New England, which "could test

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[155] Harvey Wasserman, WIN, June 22, 1978, 14.

[156] Epstein, 133.

the commitment of even the strongest Quaker soul" while Clam staff "turned over rapidly as nervous systems burned out under the strain."[157]

It was in this tense atmosphere that New Hampshire's Attorney General Philip Rath (who had recently replaced David Souter) astutely handed the Clamshell Alliance an offer that would exacerbate the Clams' divisions to the breaking point. Rath approached the Clamshell's 13-member coordinating committee with an offer to allow the Clams to hold a legal three-day rally on eighteen acres of property on the Seabrook site. The only conditions were the Clams would promise to leave the site at the designated time and engage in no illegal actions. Many believed the offer was meant to be rejected and thus make the Clams look obstinate and the state and PSNH appear reasonable by comparison. Although the conservative Manchester Union Leader denounced the deal as a "capitulationist" compromise with the Clamshell, Governor Thomson and PSNH supported it.[158]

"The offer hit the Clamshell like a thunderbolt," Wasserman wrote sometime later, adding, "The Rath proposal was clearly an attempt at cooptation... Polarization within the Alliance soared sky-high."[159] "Soft Clams" argued that acceptance of the proposal would neutralize Thomson and the Loeb press's depiction of the Clams as a militant fringe and afford the Clams an opportunity to stage a legal event in which the antinuclear silent majority, the so-called "Closet Clams", would come out into the open. "Hard Clams" shot back that the Governor and PSNH would never make such an offer if

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[157] Wasserman, "Resistance Gets Set for the Spring", The Nation, February 11, 1978; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 108.

[158] *Ibid.* 109-10; Epstein, 76-8.

[159] Wasserman, 110.

it didn't serve their interests, that it was an effort to bottle up the antinuclear movement's growing militancy and that acceptance would be a blatant sell out.[160]

Since the offer was made only several weeks before the planned June occupation and at a time when the Clamshell had little hope of reaching consensus on how to occupy the site, a response had to come quickly. The Clamshell coordinating committee replied with a series of demands for safety requirements and plans for nuclear disposal that if accepted would have had the effect of shutting down the plants. Rath refused these counterproposals. With time running out, the coordinating committee accepted Rath's proposal without sending the question down through the "spokes" to the Clamshell's many affinity groups for approval. The committee announced, "The Clamshell has decided to hold a completely legal action and to not transgress the fenced in construction area. Anyone who does so is not a member of the Clamshell Alliance."[161] This unilateral decision was almost heresy in an organization that had always worked by consensus and claimed to be without leaders. The fact that the deal was reported in the press before the coordinating committee had time to notify local Clam chapters, making it a *fait accompli*, compounded the outrage.[162]

Acceptance of the Rath proposal set off a storm within the Clamshell. Members denounced the coordinating committee as "sell outs" and accused them of "betrayal", "subversion of process" and "elitism". Harvey Halpern, an outspoken representative of the Boston "Hard Clams" called a legal rally "an ineffective symbolic act", adding, "I have nothing against legal rallies, but we can't stop there. I would like to have direct

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[160] *Ibid.* 113; Epstein, 68-75, 80-84.

[161] Wasserman, 113.

[162] *Ibid.*

action rather than moral witness."[163] Boston "Hard Clams" announced the formation of "Clams for Democracy" and talked openly of carrying out civil disobedience on their own at the legal rally. Others begrudgingly accepted the deal. Although many Clams pointed out the positive side of the deal, few were convincing or enthusiastic. In the maelstrom that followed acceptance of the Rath proposal, the fault lines that had been growing in the Clamshell became clearer. Many discerned a Seabrook-western Massachusetts alliance that advocated the deal, with Boston Clams divided and most other out-of-state Clams decidedly against the deal. The former defended the deal as necessary to maintain the Clams' local base and as an opportunity for outreach to the supposed legions of "Closet Clams". The latter replied that locals should not be given a special veto within the Clamshell as a nuclear catastrophe at Seabrook would affect much of the region and since Seabrook had become a national symbol of nuclear power.[164] Barbara Epstein argues that the divisions took on the dimensions of a "rural *vs.* urban" dichotomy, writing, "many Clamshell activists in northern New England believed that the rural roots of the movement mattered most, that what went on in Boston should not be given undue weight. The view circulated among the rural people (most of whom had recently fled the cities themselves) that the behavior of the Hard Rain people could be put down to urban stress: city life drives people crazy."[165] Epstein singles out the activists from the Montague Farm as representative of this tendency: "If any social form was privileged in the movement it was the collective. The influence of the Montague

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[163] New Times, July 24, 1978, 19.

[164] Epstein, 75-6.

[165] *Ibid.* 76.

Farm people was enhanced by the fact that they represented a rural commune…"[166] For "Hard Clams", however, this was unacceptable and many referred to activists such as Anna Gyorgy, Sam Lovejoy and Harvey Wasserman as the "Montague Farm Gang" or the "Montague Farm Mafia".[167] The divisions between urban militants and countercultural rural activists hearkened back to the fissures that shot through the Liberation News Service in 1968, and was a far cry from the harmony, unity and good feelings of the 1977 occupation.

Throughout 1977 and 1978, Wasserman had been not only the foremost chronicler of the Clamshell movement in numerous magazine articles, but had become an official spokesperson for the movement. Throughout its coverage of the Seabrook saga, the New York Times and Boston Globe repeatedly sought out Wasserman for comment, frequently juxtaposing Wasserman's replies with responses from Meldrim Thomson. In almost all of Wasserman's articles and interviews, he dealt openly with challenges facing the Clamshell Alliance and divisions in the movement. A notably different tone emerges in Wasserman's piece for WIN magazine in June 1978. In an uncharacteristically partisan tone, Wasserman denounced Black Rose and Hard Rain as "a small but persistent minority bent on blocking unanimity without compromise" and practitioners of "minority tyranny".[168] Wasserman insinuates that the Boston groups were *agent provocateurs*: "Such infiltration could serve at least two purposes – it could provide police with a constant supply of information, and it could also serve to disrupt the organization from within… and promote violence." Backing off a bit, he wrote,

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[166] *Ibid.* 84-5.

[167] *Ibid.* 84-5.

[168] Wasserman, WIN, June 22, 1978.

"There are obviously those within the movement who sincerely do not accept the tactics of non-violence as the best method of stopping atomic power and weapons and charges of police infiltration must never be made against *specific people* [emphasis added] without plenty of evidence."[169] Sam Lovejoy told a reporter, "It's absolutely true that this organization is paranoid. I've seen some new faces who were pretty suspicious-looking to me."[170] For "Hard Clams", in turn, Wasserman and his associates were suspect. Harvey Halpern of the "Hard Clams" called Jim Garrison, one of the Clam architects of the deal, "a psychotic liar or a police agent."[171]

As in-fighting spread through the Clams' ranks, both "Hard" and "Soft" Clams invoked the experience of the much larger European antinuclear movement. For Boston Harvey Halpern, the European antinuclear activists had made fence-cutting an art form, which Americans would be wise to emulate. Further, the key to the success at Wyhl was that occupation's sheer numbers, something the Clamshell was now in a position to replicate.[172] For Wasserman, the lessons of Wyhl were different: "The three to four thousand trained occupiers on which the [Clamshell] Alliance knew it could count might have been able to move in from Massachusetts and Maine. But that was contrary to the founding principles that, as at Wyhl, Germany, actions must spring from the local community. No land, no local support – no occupation."[173]

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[169] *Ibid.* 14.

[170] "Seabrook: Another Kent State?", Valley Advocate, June 14, 1978, 14.

[171] New Times, July 24, 1978, 19.

[172] Epstein, 73.

[173] Wasserman, "Resistance Gets Set for the Spring", The Nation, February 11 ,1978; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 113.

The decision of the Clamshell Coordinating Committee left negative feelings. Recriminations and second-guessing that would last for years. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the formation of the Clamshell Alliance, "Soft" Clam Kathy Wolff looked back, still torn and said, "Perhaps we should have forged ahead with the occupation."[174] In a 1981 interview, Harvey Wasserman reflected, "For whatever reason... people in New Hampshire decided that politically it was acceptable to break the law, but it was not right to destroy property. Now in Massachusetts it might have been different, I think it would have been different."[175] Ultimately, the decision sapped much of the Clamshell's militancy, leaving a good deal of demoralization in its wake and depleted the movement of its momentum, which was its strength. Had the Clams attempted to enter the Seabrook site by force, however, there is little doubt that things would have gotten rough. Governor Thomson was determined to avoid another illegal occupation and made clear his willingness to use force to do so. A violent confrontation would have altered the non-violent image of both the Clamshell Alliance and the national antinuclear movement at the time. In West Germany, radical leftists in the antinuclear movement waged huge street battles with riot police, which ended up squandering much of the good will the movement had gained with the West German public after the peaceful mass occupation of Wyhl in 1975.[176] Wasserman described the damned-if-you-do-damned-if-you-don't scenario that faced the Clamshell Alliance:

> They made us a middle-ground offer that became very hard to refuse. If we refused a peaceful solution we'd appear unreasonable and lose the credibility we gained last year. If we accepted, it would look like we were

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[174] Peacework, July/August, 1996, 8.

[175] Valley Advocate, January 21, 1981, 6-7.

[176] Joppke, 100-130.

growing soft. It was very well calculated to split the alliance and it succeeded.[177]

The Seabrook Alternative Energy Fair: June 23-26, 1978

The negative fallout from the Clamshell Alliance's decision to accept the Rath proposal obscured some of the positive features of the legal "occupation" which occurred in mid-June. With very little time to organize, the Clamshell was able to put together a three and a half day event which was attended by over 20,000 people. Approximately 6,000 Clams camped out on the site during the event, many acting as "peace marshals" and directing the massive influx of traffic to the site. At the fair held Saturday, June 24 were numerous alternative energy exhibitions such as solar energy collectors, solar ovens, windmills and geodesic domes. There were numerous informational tables with literature discussing the dangers of nuclear power and the potential of conservation and alternative energy.[178] By 1978, the national antinuclear movement was placing added emphasis on conservation and energy alternatives to coal, oil and nuclear. This was in large measure due to the 1976 state referenda campaigns, where antinuclear activists concluded their antinuclear message suffered from not putting forth alternatives to nuclear energy more forcefully. Many concluded that the "jobs *vs.* the environment" framework of the nuclear debates in the 1976 referenda campaigns had worked to the detriment of the antinuclear movement.[179] A further impetus toward the emphasis on alternative energy and conservation came with Amory

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[177] New York Times, June 23, 1978, 18.

[178] Boston Globe, June 24, 25, 26, 1978; "We Did It Again", Clamshell Alliance News, July 1978; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 116-121.

[179] Joppke, 71-77.

Lovins' 1976 work, Soft Energy Paths, in which the respected scientist outlined a new "soft" model of energy production and use which would not only diminish dependence on oil, coal and nuclear energy, but take energy production from huge multinational corporations and disperse it in a decentralized and democratic manner throughout the United States. Lovins vision of locally controlled energy had great appeal to antinuclear groups like the Clamshell which so highly valued grass-roots democracy.[180]

The Alternative Energy Fair offered the Clamshell Alliance an opportunity to showcase "soft" energy and its potential. Despite the absence of a confrontation between the Clams and the state, the event still received a good deal of friendly press and media coverage. The event had the feel of a county fair more than a political rally, which largely contributed to the huge crowds of local Seabrook and other New Hampshire residents. Some were the much bally-hoed "Soft Clams", while many others were merely curious. Nevertheless, the Alternative Energy Fair afforded the Clamshell Alliance an opportunity to communicate with many people who would have been scared off by the prospect of a confrontation. Adding to the festive atmosphere were musical performances and speeches on Sunday, June 25 by nationally known performers such as Pete Seeger, Arlo Guthrie and Jackson Browne. The Sunday rally included speakers such as Dr. John Gofman who had testified on behalf of Sam Lovejoy in 1974, civil rights veteran and comedian Dick Gregory and renowned pediatrician and antiwar activist, Dr. Benjamin Spock. Some of the speakers found themselves involved in the "Hard Clam"-"Soft Clam" dispute. Dick Gregory told a reporter for the Boston Globe he was shocked to hear about the deal with the state and had second thoughts about

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[180] Amory Lovins, Soft Energy Paths: Toward a Durable Peace (San Francisco: Friends of the Earth International, 1977).

attending. In a one-on-one with "Hard Clam" Harvey Halpern, Benjamin Spock said, "... if enough people show their opposition to nuclear power, whichever way they do it, it doesn't matter."[181]

As New Hampshire locals milled around information tables and involved themselves with interactive exhibits, "Hard Clams", mainly from Boston and western Massachusetts colleges, organized as "Clams for Democracy", circulated through the crowd handing out literature calling for another mass occupation of the Seabrook site. One Clams for Democracy flier read:

> A large number of people have experienced dissatisfaction with the shallowness of political debate within the Clamshell. The leadership's private dealings with the state in recent weeks has aggravated the situation, creating doubts about the Alliance's ability or desire to stop nuclear power through direct action... How can we mobilize ourselves in solidarity AGAINST the state?[182]

Some discussed staying on the site after the designated hour for leaving, but no occupation materialized.[183] In an interview for the New York Times, Wasserman sought to put the best possible face on the Fair:

> This demonstration brought out the closet Clams. The vast majority of the people who came here Sunday were local people who have had doubts about the Clams in the past. I've always thought we'd stop this plant, but at times I've been weary. Now I'm sure.[184]

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[181] Boston Globe, June 25, 1978, 1.

[182] "Seabrook Protest Largest Anti-Nuke Rally in U.S.", Valley Advocate, July 5, 1978, 10. Out-of-staters, many coming hundreds of miles were particularly outraged. One told a reporter, "I suppose I would have been scared by Thomson and his Blue Meanies, but I would have come anyhow... I can't get over the thought that this is only going to be a fun fair, and my husband and I didn't come 200 miles to camp out at a fair for the weekend." Another sighed, "I came up from Louisiana. It wasn't until I got here that I found out this occupation has been called off." *Ibid.*

[183] Boston Globe, June 26, 1978, 20-1.

[184] New York Times, June 27, 1978, 10.

Rennie Cushing reiterated the sentiment: "There are even more closet Clams than we thought."[185] There was a good deal of evidence to support this. The Boston Globe noted the large number of families with children at the event, such as Paul and Shirly Trabucco of Kensington, New Hampshire, who said, "We're not members of any group. We just believe nuclear power should be stopped. What are you going to do with all that radioactive waste? It's not much of a legacy to leave our kids."[186] Harvey Halpern's verdict was much different. He described the event as merely a way "...for a few people to play out their frustrations. It's strictly symbolic, not a Clamshell action, and without political effect."[187]

Meanwhile at Manchester, Governor Thomson attended a pro-nuclear rally and "clambake", declaring the Clamshell Alliance to be "regenerated and rehabilitated".[188] Asked if the poor attendance of only 500 people at his pro-nuclear rally was a sign of growing doubts about nuclear power, the governor declared the low turnout was "Because supporters of nuclear power are working people." But overall Thomson acted triumphant, symbolizing his sense of victory over the Clamshell Alliance with his "clam bake" and telling one reporter, "I'm going to eat some clams."[189] When the Alternative Energy Fair was complete, Thomson declared victory, gloating in a manner that most certainly rankled those who decided to accept the Rath proposal:

> At no time was there one-minute construction time lost by workers, and at no time was any portion of construction halted as a result of either direct

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[185] Boston Globe, June 26, 1978, 1.

[186] *Ibid.* 1.

[187] *Ibid.* 20-1.

[188] New York Times, June 26, 1978, 14.

[189] The Progressive, September 1978, 28-31.

or indirect actions by demonstrators. The Clamshell Alliance therefore has experienced what must be to them a very distinct and humiliating defeat.[190]

Clams for Direct Action at Seabrook Take the Initiative: The October 6-9, 1979 Siege of Seabrook

A new organization, Clams for Direct Action at Seabrook (CDAS) grew out of the 1978 Clams for Democracy movement. The new organization was determined to move on its own and carry out the type of militant action they'd envisioned for June 1978. The organization had a large student base from western Massachusetts, Boston and Providence, Rhode Island colleges and universities, and enjoyed support from the International Socialists organization (ISO), a Trotskyist splinter group, and Boston's Haymarket Fund, an anarchist organization. Wrote the Boston Herald American, "The Coalition for Direct Action at Seabrook is the black sheep of the Clamshell Alliance."[191]

CDAS announced plans for a forced occupation of the Seabrook site for October 6, 1979. Harvey Halpern was the driving force and public spokesperson for the new group. A CDAS pamphlet declared, "By direct action, we mean acting to stop nuclear power ourselves, without appealing to or recognizing the legitimacy of the state or corporate authority... We will be seriously challenging the authority of the state..."[192] Another flier proclaimed the group would cut fences to gain entrance to the site and then "actively resist arrest" by running, linking arms and erecting barricades. "Once on the site", the pamphlet continued, "we plan to build a community of people living

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[190] New York Times, June 27, 1978, 10.

[191] Boston Herald American, October 5, 1979, 1 and 4.

[192] *Ibid.*

cooperatively with the goal of preventing construction from continuing. We plan to stay until construction is irrevocably canceled."[193]

Like the original founders of the Clamshell Alliance, the CDAS sought to lay claim to the mantle of legitimacy by comparing their planned occupation to the West German occupation at Wyhl. In one flier by an affiliated group, the Student Coalition Against Nukes Nationwide (SCANN), the October 6 organizers declared, "The occupation of Seabrook has the potential to stop its construction permanently. Five years ago, West Germans occupied a nuclear plant site in Wyhl. To date there has been no construction."[194] In the CDAS October 6 handbook, "Let's Shut Down Seabrook!" the group stated, "The people at... Wyhl found that they could only depend on themselves to make the fundamental changes needed to protect their health and safety."[195]Critics pointed out, however that the Wyhl occupation had depended on local support, which the October 6 occupation generally did not have.[196] The Seacoast New Hampshire Clamshell put out a statement opposing the October 6 occupation, arguing it ignored the "present political and economic climate of the state", and promised to unleash state violence that would hurt the local movement. The public letter declared:

> We state this as our formal position because, unlike others who may, if they choose to, ignore the action, whatever happens on October 6 will have a direct effect on our lives, our future organizing and our relation to our neighbors. The CDAS proposal is like an electric fan – if we get in

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[193] "Some Important Questions and Answers", CDAS Flier, *circa* summer/fall 1979. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[194] "Join the Occupation to Shut Down Seabrook, October 6", SCANN Flier, *circa* summer/fall 1979. Frances Crowe Collection, Sophia Smith Collection.

[195] "Let's Shut Down Seabrook!" Handbook for the October 6, 1979 Direct Action at Seabrook, *circa* summer/fall 1979. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[196] One of the few important exceptions was Tony and Louisa Santasucci, who allowed over 1,500 protestors to camp on their property during the October 1979 action. Boston Globe, October 9, 1979, 24.

front of it, we get blown over, if we get behind it, we get sucked in. We have chosen to stand to the side.[197]

CDAS responded that it was not them but PSNH that was running roughshod over locals' wishes. The organizers further argued that Seabrook was now a "worldwide symbol" and that "We all live in Seabrook".[198] WIN magazine published a debate between Rudy Perkins of the Boston Hard Rain affinity group and "Soft" Clam Igal Roodenko, former chair of the War Resisters League, who opposed the occupation. Roodenko argued , "The Call for the occupation is full of anger, and anger inhibits clear thinking." He charged the CDAS with a "macho" style and "devil theory of politics" that would prove counterproductive. In response, Perkins accused the original Clamshell organizers of being hypocritical and selling out: "In 1976 the Clamshell Alliance was formed specifically to leave the well-worn channels of acceptable protest, because those channels had proven to be dead ends... It is the worst possible moment for a retreat to pre-Clamshell strategies."[199]

The CDAS handbook stated "October 6 will be a departure from civil disobedience."[200] Members of the Clamshell Alliance who advocated non-violence were particularly disturbed by this emphasis on physical resistance, which they believed threatened to pit ""demonstrators' against 'workers' and 'police'". The New Hampshire AFSC issued a statement that said that although they have "no reason to suppose that the

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[197] "Seacoast New Hampshire Clamshell Position on the October 6 Occupation", *circa* fall 1979. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[198] "Let's Shut Down Seabrook!" Handbook for the October 6, 1979 Direct Action at Seabrook, *circa* summer/fall 1979. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[199] "Pros and Cons – The October 6 Occupation", WIN, September 27, 1979, 14-16.

[200] "Let's Shut Down Seabrook!" Handbook for the October 6, 1979 Direct Action at Seabrook, *circa* summer/fall 1979. Frances Crow Papers, Sophia Smith Collection. In her copy of the handbook, the only marks made by Frances Crowe were to underline that passage.

Coalition for Direct Action at Seabrook wants to perpetuate violence at Seabrook", such would be the result.[201] A group called "Citizens for Nonviolence at Seabrook" appeared on October 6 to distribute cards imploring all sides "to refrain from acts of physical violence under any circumstances."[202]

When the showdown came on October 6, 1979, approximately 2,500 hardcore activists heeded the CDAS's call, far fewer than the 10,000 hoped for. Although activists of all ages were among the ranks, college students and out-of-staters were especially prevalent. Awaiting them were over 200 members of the New Hampshire National Guard and 250 state police from all the New England states except Connecticut, where they were needed to deal with recent tornado damage. Unlike his predecessor, Michael Dukakis, Massachusetts' new pro-nuclear governor Ed King dispatched the Massachusetts State police to the Granite State.[203] The new governor of New Hampshire, Democrat Hugh Galen, likewise took different action than his predecessor in 1977. Galen kept a low profile and avoided inflammatory statements. And rather than have protestors bog down New Hampshire armories and courts, Galen ordered police and the National Guard to repel efforts to enter the Seabrook construction site by whatever means deemed necessary and keep arrests to a minimum.[204]

What ensued were three days of assaults on the barbed-wire enclosed Seabrook site, which police and the National Guard repelled with water cannon, mace, fire hoses,

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[201] 'Statement of the American friends Service Committee of New Hampshire Concerning the October 6 Demonstration at Seabrook". September 24, 1979. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[202] "Citizens for Nonviolence at Seabrook" card, *circa* fall 1979, Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[203] Boston Globe, October 7, 1979, 1 and 18.

[204] Boston Globe, October 10, 1979, 25.

smoke bombs and tear gas (German shepherds were held in reserve but not used.) Protestors attempted to cut through the fence with wire cutters while police poked their night sticks through the chain link fence and drove them back. The police repeatedly maced and tear-gassed both protesters and reports, over 400 of whom were among the protestors covering the story. On the first day the protesters did break through the fence at one spot causing police to pour through and aggressively drive them back. For three days it continued, sporadic attempts to break through being repelled, protestors retreating, regrouping and trying again. Many activists continued to argue for non-violence and some sought to address police and National Guard through the fence about the dangers of nuclear power.[205]

The CDAS's lack or organizational experience was especially evident. Many of the roving bands seeking to break through the fence were stymied by a lack of coordination, and affinity group meetings bogged down in tactical disputes. The running battles occasional became farcical. At one point, a Maine affinity group flying the state flag along with an American flag found itself rushed by members of the Maine National Guard, who charged from behind a gate in the fence, seized the protestors' Maine flag and returned with it behind the fence, where they neatly folded it.[206] It rained heavily for the three days adding to the desultory feel of the action, as each day saw more of the original 2,500 trickle away. Some expressed disillusionment, while others felt embittered and radicalized by the aggressive police tactics. Declared one activist, "There wasn't enough of us and the police had all the weaponry. I think the cops are inviting terrorism

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[205] Boston Globe, October 7, 8 and 9, 1979.

[206] Boston Globe, October 8, 1979, 31.

by the way they're handling this." Said another, "It was like this in the 60s. This is how the Weathermen got started and it could happen again."[207]

After three days, the action was over, the fence breached but once and the attempted entrance quickly repelled by the police barricade. Authorities arrested only twenty-one protestors.[208] There would be no rerun of either the occupation of Wyhl, nor the militant mass street battles that led to a constitutional crisis in West Germany in the late 1970s. The constituency for late 1960s militancy was not there. The CDAS had hoped that the nuclear disaster at Three Mile Island the previous spring would help marshal recruits for the new confrontational direction they envisioned. Rather, the disaster further swelled the national non-violent movement against nuclear power, with Massachusetts activists once again at the center.

Nuclear Energy's "Tet": Three Mile Island, March 28, 1979

On March 28, 1979, the Unit 2 nuclear reactor at Three Mile Island, Pennsylvania experienced a series of technical malfunctions and human errors which caused the feed water lines to the plant's cooling system to be cut off, beginning a reactor core meltdown. As technicians frantically arrived at the site to try to arrest the meltdown, over 100,000 residents in the Harrisburg area were evacuated. With great effort, a full-blown meltdown that would have sent a radioactive cloud across a huge swath of Pennsylvania and New Jersey was narrowly averted. Although similar near-meltdowns had occurred before – most notably at the Enrico Fermi reactor outside of

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[207] Boston Globe, October 10, 1979, 25.

[208] *Ibid.*

Detroit in 1967 – the disaster at Three Mile Island was the closest the nation had come to experiencing a catastrophe of unimaginable proportions.[209]

Throughout the 1970s, antinuclear activists had drawn parallels between nuclear energy and the war in Vietnam. Ralph Nader had proclaimed nuclear power to be "this country's technological Vietnam."[210] Anna Gyorgy stated, "Nuclear power seemed in many ways to be the 'Vietnam War brought home'. By aiding the nuclear industry while assuring the public it had nothing to fear, the government was supporting an energy source that could prove as lethal as any war."[211] In 1979, Harvey Wasserman was not alone in declaring Three Mile Island to be the "Tet" of the nuclear industry. In his 1979 book, Energy War: Reports From the Front, Wasserman wrote, "During and immediately after Tet, military officials downplayed the importance of the attack... we saw the same thing during Three Mile Island."[212]

Just as with the Tet Offensive of 1968, the near-meltdown at Three Mile Island in 1979 was a turning point. In the parlance of nuclear physics, opposition to nuclear power was reaching a "critical mass". The accident at Three Mile Island occurred just days after the release of The China Syndrome, a major motion picture starring Jack Lemon, Jane Fonda and Michael Douglas which depicted a near-meltdown at a fictional California plant.

On May 6, a little over a month after the accident, the largest antinuclear rally to date took place outside the capitol building in Washington, D.C. attended by between

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[209] Daniel F. Ford, Three Mile Island: Thirty Minutes to Meltdown (New York: Viking Press, 1981); John G. Fuller, We Almost Lost Detroit (New York: Ballentine Books, 1975).

[210] Joppke, 62.

[211] *Ibid.* 78.

[212] Wasserman, Energy War: Reports from the Front, 249; Joppke, 140.

70,000 and 125,000 people and featuring nationally known speakers such as Jane Fonda, Dick Gregory, Tom Hayden and California governor Jerry Brown. Massachusetts senator Edward Kennedy sent a message of support, which was read at the rally. Time magazine described the peaceful antinuclear rally as "one of the largest marches since the Vietnam era."[213] Sam Lovejoy and other Montague activists played a leading role in the May 6 Coalition, which organized the rally, and Lovejoy acted as master of ceremonies. On May 7, six members of the coalition, including Lovejoy met with President Jimmy Carter in the White House.[214] The antinuclear movement had high hopes for Carter beginning with the 1976 encounter in New Hampshire, when Carter told the press and Clamshell activists that nuclear power should be "a last resort". That same year, Carter addressed the United Nations and declared, "U.S. dependence on nuclear power should be kept to a minimum necessary to meet our needs. We should apply much stronger safety standards as we regulate its use. And we must be honest with our people concerning its problems and dangers."[215] Upon Carter's election, Ralph Nader declared that if Carter failed to act "it won't be because he doesn't know the danger; it won't be because he doesn't have the knowledge; it won't be because he doesn't have the authority; it will be because he doesn't have the guts."[216] Harvey Wasserman proclaimed, "If Carter is held to his campaign rhetoric, his inauguration should be a landmark in the decline of nuclear power… The role of James Earl Carter in

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[213] Time, May 21, 1979, 17; Newsweek, May 21, 1979. 34-5.

[214] "Activist Confronts the President", Greenfield Recorder, May 18, 1979.

[215] "Address by Jimmy Carter on Nuclear Energy and World Order at the United Nations", May 13, 1976. A copy is in the Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts.

[216] "Carter's Choice and Ours", New Age 1977; Energy War: Reports from the Front, 67.

the next four years will be fascinating to follow. He might be an environmental crazy for all we know."[217]

By 1979, the antinuclear movement had become disillusioned with Carter, who did little except oppose the Clinch River fast breeder reactor in Tennessee, and whose administration gave the go ahead for the Seabrook reactors in 1977. At that time, the Clamshell Alliance News blasted Carter, stating, "President Carter seems to be turning the Environmental Protection Agency into a bad joke… Carter has, with this decision, destroyed his credibility with those who supported him in the name of the natural environment…"[218]When, on May 7, 1979, Carter met with Lovejoy and the other antinuclear activists, the administration asked the press to leave, and the activists confronted the president. "We were trying to flush out Carter's position on nuclear power. I think we did that," said Lovejoy after the meeting. He continued, "His position basically was 'we're not going to shut down nuclear power so don't kid around'… I think the man is drowning. He's a technocrat who takes one step at a time… He doesn't think in large terms."[219] In 1981, Wasserman, who had such optimism in 1976, declared that Carter "sold us down the river on nuclear power, there is no doubt about it."[220] Thus, despite inroads made with such politicians as California governor Jerry Brown and Senator Ted Kennedy, both of whom would challenge Carter for the Democratic presidential nomination the following year, the antinuclear movement had little impact on the White House.

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[217] *Ibid.* 68.

[218] "Clams Blast Carter for Nuclear Position at Seabrook", Clamshell Alliance News, June 1977, Vol. 2 No. 1. Frances Crowe papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[219] The Activist Confronts the President", Greenfield Recorder, May 18, 1979.

[220] Valley Advocate, January 21, 1981, 6-9.

The post-Three Mile Island movement continued to gain momentum later that summer, when a group of musicians formed a group called "MUSE" – "Musicians for Safe Energy" – and staged a star-studded "No Nukes" concert to raise money and awareness. Thousands attended the five gala concerts at Madison Square Garden featuring Jackson Brown, Bruce Springsteen, Carly Simon, James Taylor and others. The event then became a motion picture.[221] Once again, Montague activists played a major role. The ubiquitous Lovejoy was the president of MUSE and executive producer of the concert and the film, which he distributed nationally in a contract with Warner Brothers. Wasserman was the spokesmen for MUSE. Green Mountain Post films contributed a twenty-minute documentary entitled "Save the Planet", which aired in the middle of each concert and in the No Nukes film.[222]

The five days of concerts ended with an antinuclear rally in New York's Battery Park, attended by as many as 200,000 people. Speaking at the rally were Tom Hayden, Bella Abzug, native-American activist Winona LaDuke and Pete Seeger. The organizers invited only one elected official, the antinuclear firebrand Congressman Ed Markey of Massachusetts, who told the crowd:

> People who are a part of this perhaps can learn from the lessons of the 1960s, that demonstrations alone are not effective, that politicians can ignore mass demonstrations, as occurred with the war in Vietnam, and that the only way of really being effective is to take these demonstrations

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[221] Joppke, 84; No Nukes: The MUSE Concerts for a Non-Nuclear Future, Madison Square Garden, September 19-23, 1979.

[222] "Rockin' Down the Nukes: MUSE-ings from the Musicians", Valley Advocate, October 3, 1979, 14, 16 and 19; Greenfield Recorder, November 29, 1980. Some critics charged that the media and press focus on the celebrities detracted from the antinuclear message of the concerts, while others felt the Green Mountain Post films antinuclear film seemed out of place amidst the music. Others charged that Warners Brothers distribution of the No Nukes concert film was erratic to which the company replied that perhaps the political title of the concert film scared people away. Many theaters refused to show the film due to numerous instances of audiences dancing in the aisles. Greenfield Recorder, November 29, 1980.

and then funnel them into the political process... When the music is over, the work has to begin..."[223]

The accident at Three Mile Island helped legitimize the antinuclear opposition and put the burden of proof on the nuclear industry. Although public opinion polls showed a majority of Americans still supporting nuclear energy, those numbers began a slow descent until by 1983 a majority of Americans opposed further nuclear plant construction.[224] Most importantly, a growing number of liberal politicians experienced an "antinuclear coming out", or, in the case of those already sympathetic to the antinuclear cause, like Ed Markey, an escalation in their opposition to nuclear power.

Enter The Liberals: Massachusetts Democrats and Opposition to Seabrook

By the turn of the decade, Massachusetts in particular, and greater New England in general, had become a stronghold of opposition to nuclear energy. Before Three Mile Island, a number of Massachusetts Democrats had, to greater or lesser degrees, aligned themselves with the antinuclear movement, although they found themselves more comfortable with the legal interveners than the direct-action wing of the movement. When Congress debated the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, which replaced the Atomic Energy Commission with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Senator Ted Kennedy introduced an amendment S. 2744 which would have required utilities to reimburse antinuclear interveners, including "reasonable attorney fees", should their interventions result in "substantial contributions" to public safety. Kennedy worked closely with Friends of the Earth, one of the more radical legal intervening groups, in

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[223] "Rockin' Down the Nukes: MUSE-ings from the Musicians", Valley Advocate, October 3, 1979, 14, 16 and 19.

[224] Joppke, 142.

writing the bill, which was defeated with strenuous effort by senators with close ties to the nuclear industry.[225] When Kennedy made a bid for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1980, under pressure from Jerry Brown who was actively courting the antinuclear vote, Kennedy announced his support for a nuclear moratorium.[226]

One Massachusetts Democrat who would have an immense impact on the Seabrook Nuclear Power Station was Congressman Ed Markey, who represented the northeast corner of the state, much of which abutted New Hampshire and was within ten miles of Seabrook. By 1980, Markey, along with Kennedy, was known as one of the "gatekeepers", those members of Congress friendly to the antinuclear movement who afforded its members access to the corridors of power. In the wake of Three Mile Island, Markey introduced two bills in his Interior and Insular Affairs Subcommittee. The first called for a six-month moratorium on the issuance of new permits for nuclear reactors; the second required approval of emergency evacuation plans by all towns and states in a given area around a nuclear plant before that plant could go on line. Although the former went down to defeat, Congress passed the latter.[227] The NRC then put into affect a requirement for an "Emergency Planning Zone" (EPZ) encompassing a ten-mile radius around a nuclear plant. Henceforth, until all affected towns and states within the ten-mile emergency planning zone submitted plans for evacuation in event of a nuclear catastrophe, no nuclear power plant could become operational. Over 130,000 people lived within the Seabrook EPZ.[228]

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[225] Duffy, 118; Jerome Price, The Antinuclear Movement, (Boston: Twaine Publishers, 1982) 10-11, 45.

[226] Newsweek, May 21, 1979, 34-5; New York Times, February 16, 1980.

[227] Duffy, 142-3.

[228] Bedford, 125-61.

The EPZ requirement became a powerful tool for opposing the Seabrook plants. In 1985, five Massachusetts towns lay within the EPZ and along with Hampton, New Hampshire just over the border, refused to submit an emergency evacuation plan. Representatives of these towns pointed to the huge traffic jams that affected the area in the summer months and argued no feasible evacuation plan was possible.[229] They found a powerful ally in Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis, who after four years out of office, made a strong political comeback and was again elected governor in 1982, defeating pro-nuclear governor Ed King in the primary in a rematch of 1978 and then easily defeating his Republican rival. Dukakis had already expressed his skepticism about further reliance on nuclear energy in his first term, and had refused to send Massachusetts police to New Hampshire as requested during the Clamshell Alliance's spring 1977 occupation. In 1986, Dukakis announced that he would support all the Massachusetts towns in the EPZ and refuse to submit an evacuation plan. That same year, Dukakis had defied the federal government by refusing to submit a civil defense plan for Massachusetts in the event of nuclear war. Previously, PSNH's opponents were the outspent legal interveners and the grassroots Clamshell Alliance; now it faced the full weight of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.[230]

The issue came to a head in September 1986 when the first Seabrook nuclear reactor was ready to go on line. The NRC pressed Governor Dukakis to submit an evacuation plan for the six affected Massachusetts towns. He refused. At a new conference, the governor stated, "The unshakable truth is this: If a serious accident occurs… the combination of conditions at Seabrook… create a foreseeable likelihood of

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[229] *Ibid.* 125-61.

[230] *Ibid.*, 141, 157-8; Duffy, 206-8; Price 89-90.

high dosages of radioactive intake, against which emergency planning and evacuation cannot adequately protect." Dukakis declared that his decision was motivated by the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl in the Ukraine. "Chernobyl changed the equation dramatically," declared Dukakis, "We are no longer talking about models and theories." Approximately fifty Massachusetts residents from border towns and antinuclear activists applauded Dukakis as he emerged from his office following the press conference. An Amesbury selectman exclaimed, "It's a whole new war now."[231]

Dukakis and New York governor Mario Cuomo, who was then leading that state's opposition to the Shoreham Nuclear Power Station on Long Island, became new symbols of state opposition to the federal government on nuclear energy. The two liberal governors argued they were acting in the spirit of President Ronald Reagan's "New Federalism" in which the president delegated more authority to the states and declared he would defer to state and regional leaders in questions pertaining to them.[232]

In early 1987, under pressure from New Hampshire Governor John Sununu and PSNH, who complained of the financial hardships due to the delay over the EPZ, the NRC unilaterally reduced the size of the zone, thus taking Massachusetts out of the equation. Both Cuomo and Dukakis appeared at the NRC's mandatory public hearings on the rule change. Cuomo's testimony was an impassioned attack on the Reagan administration's undermining of its own "Federalism". Dukakis, as usual more reserved, told the commissioners, "The area around Seabrook… could not be evacuated in the

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[231] Boston Globe, September 21, 1986, Metro Section, 1.

[232] Bedford, 157-8; Duffy, 206-8; Price, 89-90; New York Times, February 25, 1987.

event of a serious nuclear accident."[233] Assailing the financial considerations behind the rule change, Dukakis declared the rule change was "the nuclear equivalent of cutting the number of lifeboats for the 'unsinkable' Titanic [because they would] make the voyage unprofitable."[234] Meanwhile, Congressman Markey sponsored a bill, which would have given governors a veto over licensing permits for nuclear reactors. The bill, however, was defeated.[235]

In 1988, the Seabrook debate became part of the presidential election. The Boston Globe opined, "... Bush and Dukakis may well offer the voters the clearest choice ever on nuclear power."[236] Ed Markey charged, "If George Bush is elected, the NRC will try to cut corners and do everything possible to license the [Seabrook] plant."[237] New Hampshire Governor John Sununu was co-chair of George Bush's presidential campaign and led the Republican charge against Dukakis. Once again Dukakis found himself in a political grudge match with a conservative New Hampshire governor. Sununu compared New Hampshire favorably to Massachusetts and accused Dukakis of high taxes and misgoverning. Speaking in Boston, Sununu charged, "Energy is a classic example of ineptitude. You are out of additional electrical capacity." In response, a Dukakis spokesmen counter-charged, "Governor Sununu's outspokenness

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[233] Bedford, 157.

[234] *Ibid.*, 157.

[235] *Ibid.* 157.

[236] Boston Globe, May 2, 1988, 1.

[237] *Ibid.*

about Governor Dukakis is really due to the role that Governor Dukakis played in Sununu's greatest failure, which was Seabrook."[238]

Dukakis had won the New Hampshire primary the previous February and continued to campaign hard in the state, including Seabrook where he spoke out against the plant, telling local residents, "It seems to me that until we do something about nuclear waste, I can't see how we can construct and license and operate these plants."[239] Opponents of Seabrook knew the fate of the Seabrook nuclear power station hinged on the outcome of the election. Dukakis declared he would support governors who wished to veto nuclear projects and during the primaries George Bush made no secret of his support for nuclear energy in general, and Seabrook in particular. Observed a Dukakis strategist, "Seabrook is alive and well in a presidential contest… Of all the Republican candidates, George Bush is the one most likely to bring Seabrook on line."[240]

After the election, in a surprising and arbitrary move, the Reagan administration announced that it was issuing an executive order that would allow the Federal Emergency Management Agency to draw up evacuation plans when local communities refused to do so. The announcement was withheld until after the 1988 elections to deny then Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis a campaign issue.

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[238] Boston Globe, September 10, 1988, Business Section, 14.

[239] Boston Globe, August 7, 1987, 6. When asked if he supported closing existing operational nuclear plants, Dukakis replied, "I don't think as a practical matter you can do that."

[240] Boston Globe, July 24, 1988, New Hampshire Week, 1.

In early 1989, New Hampshire Governor John Sununu became the White House chief of staff for newly elected President George H. W. Bush. In 1990, the first Seabrook nuclear reactor went on line.[241]

"The Pimple on the Pumpkin"

The Clamshell Alliance limped along throughout the 1980s, holding periodic demonstrations at the Seabrook site, a ghost of its former self. The Clams never recovered from the divisive debate over fence cutting in 1978. In its short life, however, the Clamshell Alliance had elevated the nuclear issue nationally and helped increase antinuclear opposition to the point that when the accident at Three Mile Island occurred, the ground was set for the decline of the nuclear industry. The antinuclear movement came late in the development of nuclear power. Much of the industry's demise was due to the escalating costs of nuclear energy. The cost of the Seabrook plants soared from initial estimates of $500,000 to well over $2.5 billion.[242] PSNH went bankrupt in the late 1980s and had to sell all of its Seabrook shares. Nevertheless, antinuclear activists – legal interveners, direct action activists and their liberal sympathizers in government – had worked to increase both the financial and social costs of nuclear energy. Although 103 nuclear reactors remained on line, no reactor begun after 1975 was ever completed.[243] If the antinuclear movement failed to bring about a nuclear-free America, they contributed in no small measure to the decline of that industry's growth. Both President Nixon and Ford in the mid-1970s envisioned over 1,000 operational nuclear

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[241] *Bedford*, 201.

[242] *Ibid.* 162-5.

[243] Joppke, 52.

power plants providing 50% of the energy in the United States by the year 2000.[244] The antinuclear movement played an important role in changing the nation's pro-nuclear trajectory.

The movement against nuclear energy, which had grown dramatically in the wake of Three Mile Island, declined almost as fast. The biggest reason for the decline of the movement against nuclear energy was the emergence of a new movement, which would eclipse the issue of nuclear power, in Europe and the United States. Summing up the growing groundswell that would sweep over the movement against nuclear energy in 1980, Dr. Helen Caldicott declared, "Nuclear power is the pimple on the pumpkin; the pumpkin is nuclear weapons."[245]

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[244] *Ibid.* 53.

[245] *Ibid.* 148.

CHAPTER III

THE 1980 WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS NUCLEAR WEAPONS FREEZE REFERENDUM AND THE EMERGENCE OF MASSACHUSETTS AS A NATIONAL STRONGHOLD OF THE NUCLEAR FREEZE MOVEMENT

The Election of 1980

On November 4, 1980, U.S. voters went to the polls to choose a president. The national mood was angry and impatient, as all the crises of the 1970s seemed to come to a head. Earlier, the incumbent president Jimmy Carter had described the national mood as one of "malaise". For yet another year the nation endured double-digit inflation, high unemployment, high interest rates, an energy crisis and long gas lines. On Election Day, fifty-one American embassy personnel in Iran observed their one-year anniversary as hostages of militant Islamic students in Tehran. The Iranian Revolution and the ongoing hostage saga was the major news story throughout late 1979 and 1980. The crisis seemed to highlight the post-Vietnam decline of U.S. power and prestige abroad and further eroded the image of the sitting president who appeared helpless and adrift, especially after a botched military rescue mission the previous October.[1]

Jimmy Carter, the Washington outsider, had entered the White House in 1977 with an air of optimism that the Georgia governor could return the nation to the path of integrity and reform in the wake of Watergate and Gerald Ford's unpopular pardon of Richard Nixon. A moderate, pro-civil rights southern governor, Carter alternately appealed to moderate and progressive constituencies in the election of 1976.[2] Carter's

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[1] Peter Carroll, It Seemed Like Nothing Happened: America in the 1970 (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1982) 339-50.

[2] *Ibid.*, 185-231.

experience as a nuclear engineer and his campaign promises to make environmental appointments acceptable to Ralph Nader and to reduce the role of nuclear energy evoked hope among antinuclear activists. Harvey Wasserman was optimistic: "If Carter is held to his campaign rhetoric, his inauguration should be a landmark in the decline of nuclear power."[3] Before the year was out, Wasserman denounced Carter as "the Lyndon Johnson of the seventies", a president who raised left-liberal hopes only to dash them.[4]

Others soon felt the disillusionment of antinuclear activists on the left-liberal spectrum. Labor activists and their supporters in Congress felt betrayed by Carter's belated endorsement of the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Act and his unenthusiastic, half-hearted work on the bill's behalf. Although Carter appointed a record number of women and minorities to federal courts, and factored human rights considerations into U.S. foreign policy more than any president before or since, the president's erratic shifts from the center began moving decidedly and consistently to the right in 1978.[5] This was most true in U.S.-Soviet relations. Early on, Carter sought to continue his predecessors' policies of *détente*, working toward negotiation and then ratification of a new Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II). By 1978, Carter's policies were under heavy attack from the right in Congress, whose criticisms of *détente* were amplified by a rabidly anti-disarmament organization, the Committee on the Present Danger.[6] In response, Carter's foreign policy moved in an increasingly hawkish

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[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Harvey Wasserman, "The Lyndon Johnson of the Seventies", The Valley Advocate June 29, 1977. Reprinted in Wasserman, Energy War: Reports from the Front, 85-9.

[5] Carroll, 194; 214-15.

[6] Jerry W. Sanders, Peddlers of Crisis: The Committee on the Present Danger and the Politics of Containment ((Boston: South End Press, 1983).

direction. In 1978, Carter advocated the building of the mammoth MX missile, proposing to mitigate the behemoth's vulnerability to a Soviet first strike by mounting the missiles on railroad cars that would criss-cross the Great Plains. Then, in 1979, Carter agreed to a NATO decision to introduce intermediate-range Pershing and Cruise missiles into Western Europe by 1983. Whereas the allies saw the U.S. missiles as a counterbalance to similar Soviet SS-20s, the Soviet Union condemned Carter's decision to install the Pershing and Cruise missiles as a provocation tantamount to the Soviet Union's installation of missiles in Cuba in 1962.[7] In 1979, Carter issued Presidential Directive 59, which clarified U.S. nuclear policy, declaring that the goal of U.S. nuclear weapons policy was not only to achieve deterrence but also to maintain the ability to fight a limited nuclear war. Although PD 59 represented no new doctrine in U.S. nuclear weapons policy, its timing and emphasis, combined with the president's increasingly belligerent comments about the Soviet Union, further eroded *détente.*[8] The *coup de grace* came in December 1979, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to prop up an unpopular pro-Soviet government in Kabul. In response, Carter removed SALT II from consideration by Congress (although the treaty had already been affectively blocked in the Senate), ordered a boycott of U.S. grain sales to the Soviet Union and announced a U.S. boycott of the 1980 summer Olympics in Moscow.[9]

In response to Carter's lurch to the right, the restive liberal-wing of the Democratic Party launched an "anybody but Carter" movement in 1980. Entering the

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[7] Steve Breyman, Why Movements Matter: The West German Peace Movement and U.S. Arms Control Policy (New York: State University of New York Press, 2001) 35-6.

[8] Frances Fitzgerald, Way Out There In The Blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the End of the Cold War (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000) 186-7. David S. Meyer, A Winter of Discontent: The Nuclear Freeze and American Politics (New York: Praeger, 1990) 36-8. Carroll, 342.

[9] Carroll, 340-1.

primaries late, Massachusetts Senator Ted Kennedy grabbed the flagging liberal banner and denounced Carter for policies that he charged abandoned labor, the environment and *détente.* Soon, California's Governor Jerry Brown entered the presidential race, challenging Kennedy for liberals' support. As the liberals divided between Kennedy and Brown, Carter pursued a "Rose Garden" strategy, avoiding the campaign trail and asserting that matters of state, especially the crisis in Iran, necessitated his remaining at the White House. With the liberals divided, Carter successfully used the weight of incumbency to win re-nomination at the Democratic Convention in New York.[10]

Carter lumbered into the election of 1980 a badly wounded candidate. At certain points in 1980, Carter's approval ratings sank lower than Richard Nixon's during the Watergate crisis.[11] As liberals felt abandoned and moderates considered the presidential candidacy of centrist Illinois Republican, John Anderson, conservatives enthusiastically and energetically mobilized behind the most ideologically right-wing candidate ever to run for the presidency of the United States. Ronald Reagan's candidacy represented the intersection of a trajectory begun with the Goldwater campaign of 1964 and a moment in history ripe for a major electoral shift against the party in power. The former actor and General Electric spokesman had been the most eloquent defender of Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater's ill-fated 1964 presidential campaign. As liberalism hit high tide in 1964, many observers believed the extreme right's capture of the Republican Party at the San Francisco convention represented the death knell for the Grand Old Party. The Johnson landslide of that year, garnering a greater percentage of the popular vote than

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[10] Carroll, 340-2.

[11] Carroll, 212.

any presidential candidate in history, seemed to bear out such an epitaph. Yet, only two years later, Ronald Reagan won the first of two consecutive terms as governor of the nation's most populated state. Denouncing Berkeley radicals, the hippy counterculture and Black Panther militants, Reagan sought to link Great Society liberalism and New Left radicalism and move the Republican Party – and the country -- further to the right.[12]

Aided by wealthy Californians and Richard Vigueries' revolutionary direct mailing techniques, Reagan mounted a formidable challenge to incumbent president Gerald Ford at the 1976 Republican primary. Now, in November of 1980, with U.S. hostages being paraded and humiliated before the world, Soviet aggression in Central Asia, and with gas lines, inflation, unemployment, and energy shortages ravishing a seemingly rudderless nation, Reagan and the Republican right smelled blood. Reagan denounced *détente* as a "one way street" and called for a radical military build-up to counter a Soviet Union he described as bent on world domination. He also called for dramatic cuts in taxes and social programs, proclaiming government was not the solution but the problem. Appealing to religious conservatives, a fast growing force in American politics, Reagan decried the decline of the "traditional values" of "God, family and country" at the expense of secularism, feminism, gay rights and other trends of the last two decades. Reagan's strongest appeal, however, was simply as an alternative to Carter, summed up in his campaign's most effective line: "Ask yourself, are you better off than you were four years ago?" Although many Americans raised questions about the former actor's foreign policy experience, trigger-happy nuclear war rhetoric, and age (he was sixty-nine), his debate with President Carter just a week before the election appeared to

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[12] Fitzgerald, 19-71.

have given Reagan enough presidential aura to counter the concerns raised during the campaign.[13]

On the evening of November 4, 1980, before polls even closed in California, President Jimmy Carter conceded the election to Ronald Reagan. As the evening progressed it became apparent that the nation was experiencing an electoral shift of tectonic proportions. Although Reagan garnered only 51% of the popular vote to Carter's 42% and John Anderson's 7%, the electoral college count was lopsidedly in Reagan's column (489 to 49); moreover, the Republicans seized control of the Senate for the first time in over two decades and added thirty-three members to the House of Representatives. The election also saw the defeat of some of the Democratic Party's most shining progressive lights, including 1972 presidential standard-bearer Senator George McGovern and Idaho Senator Frank Church.[14]

Reagan narrowly won even Massachusetts, the sole holdout in Nixon's 1972 landslide. Reflecting the conservative tide that seemed to be sweeping the nation, Bay State voters also passed a state-wide referendum, Proposition 2 ½ which lowered and limited property tax rates (the initiative was based on California's Proposition 13 which set off the national "taxpayer revolt" in 1978.) Surveying the political landscape the day after the 1980 election offered little for those of a progressive bent to be cheerful about. However, on the political radar screen, there was a small dot blinking from western Massachusetts where voters in three state senatorial districts had voted in a non-binding referendum 59% to 41% in support of a mutual nuclear weapons freeze between the

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[13] *Ibid.;* Carroll, 342-8.

[14] Carroll, 345-6.

United States and Soviet Union. Although these districts went for Reagan by a narrow margin, the vote seemed to buck a national mood that appeared to be moving in an increasingly militaristic direction. Over the next few years, the nuclear weapons freeze movement which first took root in western Massachusetts would sweep the nation, with six states including California voting for the freeze in 1982, over 800,000 Americans rallying in New York's Central Park for a freeze that same year, the House of Representatives voting for a nuclear weapons freeze resolution in 1983, and almost all Democrats running for the party's presidential nomination in 1984 endorsing the freeze.[15] The freeze movement, in short, was soon to galvanize disillusioned radicals and liberals into a more cohesive opposition to the Reagan juggernaut. If the election of 1980 signaled the nation was moving to the right, there were also signs that the shift to the right would be energetically contested.

The Peace Movement Reborn

The demise of *détente* in the late Carter years was accompanied by an increase in disarmament activism that soon coalesced around the nuclear weapons freeze movement. Although various arms control-lobbying groups continued to work in Washington throughout the 1970s, the re-energized disarmament movement of the late 1970s and early 1980s was in many ways a return to a movement that had been dormant since the early 1960s, eclipsed by the New Left's focus on the war in Vietnam and racial inequality. Historian Paul Boyer has described this period from 1963 to 1980 as the "Big Sleep," part of the ongoing pattern of "activism and apathy" running throughout the

[15] Meyer; Douglass C. Waller, Congress and the Nuclear Freeze: An Inside Look at the Politics of a Mass Movement (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1987).

atomic age in the United States.[16] The first period of activism occurred from the end of World War II through 1949, when atomic scientists, world federalists, radical pacifists and remnants of the American left worked to bring atomic weapons under international control and preempt a nuclear arms race. With the Soviet detonation of its first atomic bomb in 1949 and the ensuing "Red Scare," the movement virtually disappeared until the late 1950s when groups like SANE helped reignite a movement to "ban the bomb," which soon focused on working for a nuclear weapons test ban. The late 1950s and early 1960s witnessed intense public questioning of the arms race, atomic weapons testing and civil defense. Concern about nuclear war permeated the popular culture as novels such as Nevil Shute's On The Beach, and Eugene Burdick and Harvey Wheeler's Fail Safe depicted the horrors of nuclear war and were made into blockbuster films including Stanley Kubrick's classic Dr. Strangelove: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb. Anxiety over the arms race reached a climax with the very real showdown between the United States and Soviet Union during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. The peace movement achieved a partial success with the Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT) signed by the Soviet Union, United States and Great Britain in 1963, which ushered in the modest beginning of *détente*. As the superpowers negotiated over nuclear weapons beginning in 1963 through the 1970s, public concern over nuclear war waned and apathy once again held sway.[17]

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[16] Paul Boyer, By The Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1985) 352-367. Also, Paul Boyer, "From Activism to Apathy: The American People and Nuclear Weapons, 1963-1980", The Journal of American History, March, 1984.

[17] *Ibid.*

Although never completely quiescent, the disarmament movement seemed almost invisible after Nixon's visits to Moscow and the signing of SALT I and the ABM Treaties. Slowly, however, the movement revived. "When the Vietnam War ended," said Northampton Quaker Frances Crowe, "many of us woke up to the fact that the Pentagon used those Vietnam years to stockpile a huge arsenal of nuclear weapons." [18] During the mid-1970s, disarmament activists such as Dr. Helen Caldicott of Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) sought to link the issue of nuclear weapons with the burgeoning movement against nuclear energy. In 1978, the United Nations General Assembly, at the behest of non-aligned nations, held its first Special Session on Disarmament in New York City as 15,000-25-000 activists joined a rally outside. During the 1979 debate in the U.S. Senate over SALT II, Oregon's maverick Republican Senator, Mark Hatfield introduced an amendment to the treaty calling for a freeze in the production and testing of nuclear weapons.[19]

Riding the growing concern generated by the antinuclear energy movement, the U.N. Special Session and the SALT II debate, a Swedish-born woman named Randall Forsberg, member of the Institute for Disarmament and Defense Studies (IDDS), based in Brookline, Massachusetts, proposed a U.S.-Soviet nuclear weapons freeze as a way to bring together the technical experts of the arms control lobby with a popular movement for an end to the arms race. Forsberg had focused on disarmament since the 1960s when she was active in Sweden's Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. The difficulty in slowing the arms race, Forsberg came to believe, stemmed from the public's

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[18] "A Journey of Conscience", Frances Crowe draft speech, *circa* 1981-1982, Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts.

[19] Meyer, 137-152.

feeling of helplessness in the face of the technical intricacies associated with arms control negotiations. This left the technical experts in the arms control lobby isolated from the general public.[20] According to Forsberg, "There was no active grassroots support [for SALT II]... I think that's the reason it was shelved."[21] Outlining what she described as the "percolate up theory", Forsberg hoped to generate a popular movement, which would create the political pressure the expert lobbying groups, needed to be effective in Washington. A proposal to freeze nuclear weapons deployment, production and testing was simple and accessible to the lay public. The narrow focus of the proposal, Forsberg believed, could bring together liberals, moderates, radicals and even some conservatives. In her 1980 manifesto, "Call to Halt the Nuclear Arms Race" (soon referred to simply as "The Call") Forsberg declared:

> Campaigns to stop individual weapons systems are sometimes treated as unilateral disarmament or circumvented by the development of alternative systems. The pros and cons of the SALT II Treaty are too technical for the patience of the average person. In contrast, an effort to stop the development and production of all U.S. and Soviet nuclear weapons is simple, straightforward, effective and mutual; and for all these reasons it is likely to have greater popular support. This is essential for creating the scale of popular support that is needed to make nuclear arms control efforts successful.[22]

Forsberg hoped to create as broad-based a movement as possible, believing the American middle class to be the key constituency for breaking through to the mainstream.[23] The freeze could appeal to those concerned about the costs of the arms

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[20] *Ibid.*, 157-8.

[21] Greenfield Recorder May 25, 1982.

[22] Randall Forsberg, "Call to Halt the Nuclear Arms Race: Proposal for a Mutual US-Soviet Nuclear Weapons Freeze", Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[23] Meyer, 162.

race and potential nuclear war but not interested in radical social transformation. Conversely, although many radicals criticized the freeze movement for not addressing the sources of the cold war, imperialism and militarism, and for being more an arms control than a disarmament movement, many nonetheless realized the freeze offered a springboard for launching a more sweeping critique of American society. Early freeze activist Mark Niedergang wrote for WIN, "The freeze provides progressives with an opportunity to criticize political and economic relations from within the mainstream."[24] Further, by halting the arms race, the freeze called into question many of the basic premises of the cold war. A freeze, if followed by serious disarmament negotiations, as hoped, would accomplish nothing short of pulling the plug on potential nuclear Armageddon.

Advocates of the freeze, including the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Mobilization for Survival (MfS), the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) and others sought to introduce the freeze proposal at the Democratic Party's 1980 convention in New York. Although championed by progressives such as California Congressman Ron Dellums and Iowa Senator Tom Harkin, both Jimmy Carter and Ted Kennedy sought to keep the freeze at arms length. The proposal was defeated 78 to 51 by the platform committee. The attempt to take the freeze directly to the national level proved a false start, which only underscored the necessity of a grassroots base.[25]

What gave the freeze its jump-start was a small group of radical pacifists in western Massachusetts who had observed how New England activists had built a mass

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[24] *Ibid.*, 166-7.

[25] *Ibid.*, 171-3.

movement against nuclear energy from the bottom up. Acting independently, these activists sought to implement Forsberg's "percolate up theory" by planting the freeze movement in the soil of western Massachusetts. Only when such local movements took root across the country, they believed, could an effective national movement be launched.[26] This localist strategy would be one of the two pillars of the freeze movement's phenomenally rapid growth. The other pillar would be a presidential administration whose massive arms build up and Strangelovian pronouncements about "winnable" and "limited" nuclear war would scare many Americans into the arms of growing nuclear weapons freeze movement.

Randy Kehler, Judith Scheckel and Traprock

In 1979, Randy Kehler was a 37-year teacher and old organic farmer with his wife Betsy Corner and daughter, Lillian. Kehler was about to embark upon a whirlwind odyssey, first leading the successful freeze referendum campaign in western Massachusetts in 1980 and then being elected to the top position of the national freeze movement in 1981, a post he held through 1983. Kehler's short, chestnut brown hair and youthful looks gave him a wholesome "all-American" appearance which belied his radical past but played well to the middle American image the freeze movement hoped to cultivate[27]. Born in Scarsdale, New York, Kehler had a typical white, middle class upbringing, telling one interviewer, "I was certainly not raised a pacifist...My parents

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[26] *Ibid.*, 173-5.

[27] Springfield Sunday Republican, November 11, 1981.

were reasonably patriotic, middle class citizens."[28] As a young man, Kehler's views on military service were far from radical: "When I turned 18 it didn't occur to me not to register [for the draft] and in college I came close to signing up for naval ROTC. It was not until several years later that I decided not to cooperate [with Selective Service]."[29] Like much of his generation, Kehler was politicized during the civil rights era and radicalized during the Vietnam War while at college. Kehler traces his political awakening to 1963, when "there was a particular incident that opened my eyes to the deeper problems besetting our country, and opened my eyes at the same time to activism..."[30] He had taken a train from Scarsdale to Harlem to see a jazz show. Emerging from the subway, Kehler saw an African American crowd listening to a Black Nationalist orator on the street. A young African American approached the naïve Kehler, and said, "You're in trouble here, this is a dangerous place for a white person to be." The young man then took Kehler to a local Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) organizing meeting for the upcoming March on Washington for Jobs and Justice. Kehler said meeting the CORE people transformed his attitude from being a "removed, elitist and condescending" middle class white who saw civil rights activists as "publicity seeking egotists" to a committed young man who returned to Scarsdale to raise money for CORE.[31]

Kehler then traveled with a CORE bus to the Washington, D.C. march in August in what he described as a "double whammy", first because the experience of seeing

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[28] Greenfield Recorder, February 9, 1980.

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] Telephone Interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

[31] *Ibid.*

Martin Luther King Jr.'s historic "I Have a Dream" speech deepened his commitment to civil rights, and secondly because on the way down he sat next to an immigrant, Max Sandine, an "elderly pacifist of Russian birth, [who] introduced me to the concept of non-violence and pacifism, which was as foreign to me as civil rights."[32]

In the mid-1960s Kehler attended Harvard University. During his time as a Harvard student, he spent a year abroad in Tanzania with a private Harvard-Radcliffe organization modeled on the Peace Corps.[33] Appalled by the massive violence and destruction of the Vietnam war, Kehler gravitated in the direction of absolute pacifism, or what he preferred to call "active non-violence".[34] Kehler's objection to war had a moral and religious grounding, though he never subscribed to any one particular faith. From 1967 to 1970, Kehler relocated to the San Francisco Bay area, the epicenter of 1960s political and cultural radicalism, where he worked as a regional organizer for the west coast branch of the War Resister's League.[35]

Kehler's pacifism became so thorough that he refused even to register with the Selective Service as a conscientious objector. In a 1980 interview, Kehler recalled, "I had declined to apply for c.o. status because I firmly believed that any form of cooperation with the military would make me a guilty party to the military's chief occupation at that time, aggression and genocide in Vietnam."[36] Kehler was convicted for non-cooperation with the draft. On Feb. 16, 1970 he began serving a 22-month

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[32] *Ibid.*

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] Greenfield Recorder, July 3, 1980.

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] Greenfield Recorder, February 9, 1980.

sentence at the federal prison in Safford, Arizona. Kehler became a war tax resister, deducting a percentage of his tax return each year comparable to the military percentage of the federal budget.[37] (In the 1990s, the federal government confiscated and auctioned off Kehler and Betsy Corner's home to pay for their back taxes, which became the subject of a Randy Leppzer documentary, An Act of Conscience.)

In 1973, Kehler returned to the east coast and settled down in Franklin County in western Massachusetts. He later described his move to western Massachusetts as "happenstance". He came with friends who told him of a new alternative school at Woolman Hill in Deerfield where he soon became co-director. Kehler felt "I liked western Mass' anyway" and saw the area as being "as good a place as any to put down roots."[38] He was soon swept up in the antinuclear movement sparked by Sam Lovejoy's toppling of the Montague weather tower.[39] In western Massachusetts, Kehler came into contact with a number of radical pacifists such as AFSC members Wally and Juanita Nelson and Frances Crowe, and became active in the region's growing network of war tax resisters. Kehler's experience with the western Massachusetts left in the 1970s helped make him a confirmed and zealous advocate of grassroots politics.[40] In 1980, Kehler declared, "Every movement has to start somewhere and it has to start small."[41]

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[37] *Ibid.*

[38] Telephone interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

[39] Greenfield Recorder, December 3, 1979.

[40] Valley Advocate, December 2, 1981.

[41] Greenfield Recorder, November 6, 1980.

After the 1980 freeze referendum victory, Kehler proclaimed, "Ours is but a small spark, but it's small sparks that often lead to raging forest fires."[42]

The other driving force in the formation of Traprock and the western Massachusetts freeze campaign was Sister Judith Scheckel. Scheckel came to western Massachusetts from the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Minnesota for an internship with the area's AFSC. Throughout her life, Scheckel felt a special calling to work among the downtrodden. Affected as many Catholics were by the social doctrines of Vatican II which called on the faithful to play a greater role in helping the world's destitute, Scheckel worked for a time with Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers and then in the mid-1970s spent several months working with the poor in Honduras.[43] Scheckel told a reporter in 1980, "I have dedicated my life to working for peace and justice, not only on an individual level but in a broader sense in the world community."[44] Scheckel's pacifism was an outgrowth of her Catholic faith. According to Scheckel, "There is strong theological and moral support [for a weapons moratorium] Every pope in the nuclear age has called for disarmament."[45] On another occasion, Scheckel declared, "a person cannot be a Christian and believe in a loving God and at the same time allow for the building of nuclear weapons."[46] Scheckel remained active in western Massachusetts throughout the

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[42] Traprock Report, Vol. 1, #5, November 1980. "Traprock Peace Center Records, 1979-1985", Series 1, Box 1, Folder 1, MS 80, Special Collections and Archives, W.E.B. Dubois Library, University of Massachusetts, Amherst (hereinafter cited as Traprock Peace Center Records.)

[43] Berkshire Eagle, October 22, 1980.

[44] Daily Hampshire Gazette, June 27, 1980.

[45] Berkshire Eagle, October 22, 1980.

[46] Amherst Bulletin, June 23, 1982.

1980s, playing an even greater role in the area's peace movement when Kehler moved to St.Louis to head the national freeze movement.

The seeds of the western Massachusetts freeze movement were planted in 1978. Recalled Kehler, "When I started, my focus was still local. The Woolman Hill school had folded in 1978... [and] the Quakers who owned it were trying to decide what to do with it." Harvey Cox of the Harvard Divinity School approached Kehler about making Woolman Hill a center for the study of non-violence. Consulting with others, who soon formed the core group of Traprock, Kehler said, "very soon we decided non-violence as a subject was too broad... looking for a more particular focus, we decided on nuclear disarmament."[47] Through local fundraising and support from the International Seminar on Training for Non-Violent Action, Kehler, Scheckel and others of the core group were able to purchase the buildings atop the hill, which had recently housed the Woolman Hill school, as well as 100 acres of bucolic farmland. Locals knew the ridge abutting the hill as "Traprock", and thus the activists named their new peace movement headquarters simply "Traprock". An eighteenth century abolitionist John Woolman had once owned the land upon which the Traprock buildings stood, a connection the twentieth century peace activists relished.[48] Soon after the official founding of Traprock in September 1979, Kehler declared, "The time has come for a new abolitionist movement, this time to abolish the institution of war... We should remember that the American abolitionists of

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[47] Telephone interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

[48] Springfield Sunday Republican, November 22, 1981.

the last century were told that slavery was a human institution that would always be with us, and yet it was abolished." [49]

According to Kehler, "[I] never heard of Randy Forsberg", but instead learned of the freeze proposal from a group of Christian pacifists centered on Sojourners magazine in Washington, D.C. Among them was Jim Wallace, who had shared the idea with Oregon Senator Mark Hatfield at one of their numerous prayer breakfasts. Hatfield then tried to insert the freeze proposal into the SALT II treaty. Kehler stated, "As an organizing tool the freeze being so conceptually simple and clear was great to organize around." He added, "Then I heard about Randy Forsberg and talked to her about it."[50]

During Traprock's first year, Kehler and Scheckel acted as the group's two full-time salaried officials (they received $800/month). They were joined by several area residents, most of whom were already active in other peace organizations, who comprised Traprock's core group and who in many ways foreshadowed in microcosm the national freeze movement to come. They included Pauline Bassett (Mobilization for Survival), Harvey Cox (Harvard Divinity School), Frances Crowe (AFSC), Gordon Faison (Movement for a New Society), Meg Gage (Amherst High School) and Judy Titus (Woolman Hill Farm Community). The core group consisted predominantly of individuals who were in their thirties or older, educated, white, middle class, and whose activism was predominantly faith-based.[51] Members of the core group espoused localism, yet also evinced a global perspective. Several of them traveled abroad in the

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[49] Greenfield Recorder, November 9, 1980.

[50] Telephone Interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

[51] Traprock Report, Vol. I, #1, February/March, 1980. Traprock Peace Center Records.

early 1980s to participate in the European and Japanese peace movements, and a few even went on peace missions to the Soviet Union and east bloc nations.[52]

Traprock's core group presaged the national movement's profile in many ways. Many observed that the freeze was an "older" movement than the 1960s anti-war movement, and indeed included many veterans of that movement. Freeze activist Jeb Brugman, the official "Peace Commissioner" of Cambridge, Massachusetts, when asked by a Boston Globe reporter in 1984, "How has the peace movement changed?" replied, "It's gotten much larger, much broader, and older – the average age [of activists] now is 30 rather than 18."[53] In 1982, radical columnists Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway, in a New Left Review article entitled "The Freeze Movement Versus Reagan" observed, "The generations who came to active political maturity at the time of the civil rights drive in the early sixties, and at the time of Kent State nearly a decade later, still probably remain the active leavening in left and left-liberal organizing in the United States."[54] At the height of the freeze movement in 1982, Newsweek observed, "Up to now, young people – especially college students, like those who protested Vietnam – have been conspicuously absent from the anti-nuclear movement."[55] Although college students were involved in freeze activism, by and large the movement was directed much more from the pulpit than the classroom. Again, the Traprock core

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[52] Traprock Report, Vol. III, # 11, September, 1983. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[53] Boston Globe, March 25, 1984.

[54] Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway, "The Freeze Movement Versus Reagan", The New Left Review 137 (January/February 1983) 20.

[55] Newsweek, April 26, 1982; 24.

group's religious orientation reflected what soon became a national trend.[56] At the height of the 1980 western Massachusetts freeze referendum campaign, Kehler told a reporter, "A high percentage of religiously motivated people are taking a lead on this."[57] In another interview, Kehler affirmed, "This is an older bunch than the antiwar groups of the Vietnam era… more middle class, more religious, more professionals in its ranks."[58] Such would be the case throughout the freeze movement's history.

Lastly and perhaps most significantly, Traprock saw the emergence of women as a leading force in defining the movement. Traprock's active members included more women than men. These female activists frequently put forward a feminist perspective on the arms race. In an early Traprock newsletter piece entitled, "War and Patriarchy", the group asserted, "War is the inevitable product of a society that teaches aggression, competition and hierarchy. We cannot end war without taking apart the patriarchal ethos which is at its root."[59] Two of the national freeze movement's most prominent leaders, Randall Forsberg and Dr. Helen Caldicott symbolized the growing importance of women in the freeze movement. Caldicott in particular emphasized what she believed to be the role of male psychology in the arms race: "Men are full of the negative masculine principles of egocentricity, competition and killing. Therefore the world is in the grip of this negative masculine principle. Women, on the other hand, have a highly developed

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[56] Cockburn and Ridgeway, "The Freeze Versus Ronald Reagan", 17-18.

[57] Undated newspaper clipping, The Post Standard by J.P. Powers. Traprock Peace Center Records, Series 5, Box 5, Folder 31, MS 80.

[58] Greenfield Recorder, May 25, 1982.

[59] Traprock Report, Vol. I, #2, April/May, 1980. Traprock Peace Center Records.

nurturing instinct and care about humanity. We have a built in passion for survival."[60] In December 1982, over 30,000 British women protested and camped out at Greenham Common to protest the impending arrival of 96 U.S Pershing and Cruise missiles. In solidarity, several thousand U.S. women formed the Seneca Women's Peace Encampment outside the U.S. Army Base in New York through which the Cruise and Pershings were supposed to pass in transit to England. Several Traprock women joined the encampment, which emphasized a feminist critique of the arms race.[61]

Traprock was officially formed in the fall of 1979 and in February 1980 began publication of The Traprock Report, a monthly newsletter with information on the group's local activities as well as international news dealing with the global peace movement. The masthead of The Traprock Report and many of the group's fundraising letters included the following quote from the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.: "I refuse to accept the cynical notion that nation after nation must spiral down a militaristic stairway into the hell of nuclear destruction. I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality."[62] Traprock would engage in many activities over the years, including a summer international peace camp where young people from around the world would stay and work together on peace issues. Traprock's first project, however, was the campaign to put the nuclear weapons freeze on the ballot in western Massachusetts for the November 1980 election. The idea for a freeze referendum grew out of western Massachusetts' recent activist history. According to Kehler, "I proposed

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[60] Daily Collegian (University of Massachusetts, Amherst) May 4, 1981.

[61] For the role of Massachusetts women activist in the Seneca Fall Women's Encampment, see Greenfield Recorder, September 6, 1983.

[62] Traprock Fundraiser, Box 1, Folder 1, MS 80, Traprock Peace Center Records.

we put a nuclear freeze on the ballot the same way we put the Montague plants on the ballot." Kehler believed a referendum campaign was a great way to "raise [an] issue, make it legitimate" and provided a good "excuse to go door to door to educate people about an issue."[63] Summing up Traprock's global vision and local activism was the popular slogan sometimes affixed to Traprock fliers, "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally."[64]

"A Small Spark": The 1980 Western Massachusetts Freeze Referendum

In 1946, Albert Einstein wrote, "To the village square we must carry the facts of atomic energy. From there must come America's voice."[65] Like the opponents of nuclear power before them, Traprock activists now took the issue of the atom to the village square. Kehler summed up Traprock's approach: "There will be no shortcuts…There's only one road and it's the long one, the one that begins in our local churches and synagogues, in our union halls and town halls, in our school auditoriums and on our village greens."[66] In fundraising letters, monthly issues of the Traprock Report, fliers, and local newspaper and television interviews, the members of Traprock emphasized their philosophy of global change through local politics. In an early fundraiser, Traprock declared, "We see the global arms race as the most visible manifestation of societies with distorted priorities. Our work to provide a grassroots training program mirrors our

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[63] Telephone Interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

[64] "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally ," Traprock Flier, Series 5, Box 5, Folder 32, MS 80, Traprock Peace Center Records.

[65] Albert Einstein, "The Real Problem is in the Hearts of Men", New York Times Magazine, June 23, 1946, 44. Quoted in Boyer, 59.

[66] Randy Kehler, Gordon Faisson, Memo: "To: Active Participants in the Nuclear Freeze Campaign", July 22, 1981. Series 1, Box 1, Folder 2, MS 80. Traprock Peace Center Records.

belief that true social change occurs when people on the local level both demand and actually create a more just world."[67] The road to Washington, these freeze pioneers believed, would be paved through local communities across America. Traprock emphasized this strategy in fundraising letters, declaring, "There already exists a handful of national organizations who do important work at the national level; but until there is a network of local, community-based organizations like Traprock who are creating local disarmament constituencies all over the country, efforts in Washington will lack the political muscle necessary to overcome the powerful forces perpetuating the arms race."[68] The point was reiterated constantly in the pages of the Traprock Report: "The main focus is on building public support from a very broad cross section of people around the country, and not focusing on Washington until that public support is large enough to cause national leaders to take heed." [69] Echoing the Clamshell Alliance, whose direct actions at Seabrook rose from 18 arrests to 180 arrests to over 1,400 arrests, Randy Kehler predicted the freeze movement would grow in a "geometric progression."[70] "Clearly", stated Kehler, "our efforts here in western Massachusetts are part of something already large and just beginning to grow."[71]

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[67] Traprock Fundraising Letter, July 26, 1979. Series 1, Box 1, Folder 1, MS 80. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[68] Traprock Fundraising Letter, August 11, 1980. Series 1, Box, 1, Folder 1, MS 80. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[69] Traprock Report, Vol. II, #1, February, 1981. Series 1, Box 1, Folder 2, MS 80, Traprock Peace Center Records.

[70] Undated newspaper clipping. The Post Standard, by J.P. Powers. Series 5, Box 5 Folder 31, MS 80. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[71] Meyer, 174.

Kehler and other early members of Traprock were galvanized into action by the failure of SALT II and the simultaneous cold war resurgence that so alarmed national disarmament and arms control organizations. An early issue of the Traprock Report responded to President Carter's Presidential Directive #59, which publicly outlined and refined what previously had been a quiet policy of planning for limited nuclear war: "Although President Carter's Directive No. 59 announces a policy which has been in effect for years, the fact that it is now being publicized is a clear indication of an attempt to make the concept of a 'limited' nuclear war palatable to the American public." [72] Traprock latched onto the freeze idea, then being discussed in Boston by Randall Forsberg's IDDA, as a way to by-pass the complexities of arms control negotiations and put the arms race before the general public in a simple manner which promised to have broad appeal. In a 1980 speech, Forsberg declared, "People who are afraid of disarmament are more willing to stop where we are, to stop building more. It's a good first step."[73] Anti-arms control organizations such as the Committee on the Present Danger indiscriminately hurled the charge of "unilateral disarmament" at radical disarmament advocates and liberal arms control groups alike. By advocating a "mutual and verifiable" U.S.-Soviet freeze of the arms race, the freeze proposal could appeal to those who saw the escalating arms race as dangerous and wasteful, but who might shy away from more radical appeals. Kehler emphasized Forsberg's point in an interview with the Greenfield Recorder, stating, "We can't say we want complete disarmament tomorrow. The first step toward stopping the threat of nuclear war is to freeze the

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[72] Traprock Report, Vol. I, #4, September, 1980. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[73] Traprock Report, Vol. I, #1, February/March 1980. Traprock Peace Center Records.

testing, production and deployment of new thermonuclear weapons... Since the arms race has never stopped, such a freeze would be a monumental achievement... It's a modest practical proposal that appeals to many people on all sides of the political spectrum. It's not a wild-eyed idea."[74]

Although Kehler and his western Massachusetts colleagues saw the appeal of the freeze proposal in terms similar to Forsberg's, they nevertheless approached the freeze idea from a much different place on the ideological spectrum. Whereas Forsberg hoped a freeze proposal would generate the popular, predominantly middle-class movement she believed necessary to make arms control efforts more effective, the Traprock activists hoped the freeze would be a first step in dismantling the military-industrial complex, the cold war national security state, and the conservative national ideology, which perpetuated them. Traprock activists, approaching the freeze predominantly from the point of radical pacifism, hoped the movement would lay the groundwork for such radical social and economic transformation of the United States.[75] The second issue of the Traprock Report in early 1980, outlined the group's more radical perspective: "Though reversing the arms race may be the absolute precondition to solving many other pressing social problems – patriarchy, poverty, racism, the destruction of the environment -- we do recognize the intrinsic connections between them all."[76]

Throughout the freeze movement's meteoric rise and decline, Forsberg worked assiduously to keep the freeze proposal simple and uncoupled from other issues such as

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[74] Greenfield Recorder, November 7, 1981.

[75] For a detailed summation of Forsberg's philosophy and strategy, see Meyer, 157-63.

[76] Traprock Report, Vol. 1, # 2, April/May 1980. Traprock Peace Center Records.

nuclear power. She also worked to keep the nascent movement's radical base publicly off the radar screen. At an early national meeting of freeze supporters, Forsberg argued the that the movement's "peacenik/radical/religious-pacifist composition... might dissuade other middle-of-the-road constituencies from participating."[77] While radicals such as Kehler hewed to this "middle-of-the-road" strategy in a general way, they nevertheless put forth their more radical vision on favorable occasions. Thus, Forsberg embraced what in many ways was a radical proposal in the pursuit of the more limited end of arms control, while Kehler and other radicals embraced a campaign whose language and tactics were moderate in an effort to bring about more radical change. The freeze was thus the fulcrum around which both liberals and radicals would push for their respective objectives. Over time this would prove the source of both the movement's strength and weakness.

In early 1980, Traprock introduced the idea of a freeze referendum in western Massachusetts to area activists. In the April/May 1980 issue of the Traprock Report, the group explained, "The moratorium concept, of simply stopping where we are, should appeal to a broad spectrum of voters. Having the questions on the ballot legitimizes the issue and gives every single voter the opportunity to say 'yes' or 'no' to the most important life-and-death question the human race has ever faced."[78] To the Valley Advocate, Kehler stated, "We don't naively believe... that we can change the course of the arms race with one referendum in western Massachusetts. We alone aren't going to do anything, but how does anything happen? It begins somewhere. This could be the

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[77] Meyer, 176.

[78] Traprock Report, Vol. I, #2, April/May 1980. Traprock Peace Center Records.

first of many referendums. This is a historic opportunity to serve as catalyst for the whole country. Massachusetts was the first [state] to vote to end the war in Vietnam and we can begin a national effort to freeze the arms race."[79]

Traprock quickly conducted outreach to western Massachusetts' many peace organizations and activated the activist infrastructure, which had sprung to life with such alacrity after Sam Lovejoy had toppled the Montague tower in 1974. Traprock member Frances Crowe, also an AFSC member, was particularly crucial in employing her already legendary organizational skills in this regard, as well as procuring AFSC funding for the referendum effort. Groups such as the Amherst Disarmament Coalition and others soon joined Traprock in co-sponsoring the referendum campaign. Armed with fliers and petitions, local activists, predominantly from the area's churches but also drawing on academics and students from nearby campuses, set up tables in town centers, supermarkets, strip malls and fairs throughout the area, seeking the 1,200 signatures necessary to place the non-binding freeze proposal on the November ballot in three state senate districts comprising Hampshire, Franklin, Berkshire and parts of Hamden counties in western Massachusetts. The petition drive was accompanied by an education campaign on the arms race, consisting of numerous public talks, study groups and seminars on the arms race, as well as several viewings of films at area such as 1,000 Cranes: The Children of Hiroshima, We Are the Guinea Pigs, War Without Winners and the ever-popular Dr. Strangelove.[80]

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[79] Valley Advocate, October 1, 1980.

[80] Meyer, 173-5. Undated newspaper clipping, *circa* fall, 1980. Frances Crowe Private Papers, Northampton, Massachusetts.

The freeze campaign sought to remain separate from the issue of nuclear energy. Petitioners received instructions to ask people to help them get a "proposal for a freeze on the arms race on the ballot", not a proposal for a freeze in nuclear weapons. A memo, "Tips for Petitioners" instructed, "We want to stay away from the word 'nuclear' since it has become such an emotionally charged word and since people don't easily separate it from the nuclear energy issue."[81] Randy Kehler recalled, "Some groups felt nuclear weapons and energy should be joined at the hip… We needed to keep the focus simple and clear and not take on an issue that divided along some different lines."[82]

Within a short time the movement had procured the requisite signatures and the freeze became "Question #7" on the November ballot. (The activists actually procured over 5,000 signatures, far surpassing the minimum required to put the question on the ballot.[83]) The official referendum question read:

> Shall the State Senator from this district be instructed to introduce a resolution in the State Senate:
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> 1) Requesting the President of the United States to propose to the Soviet Union a mutual nuclear weapons moratorium by which the United States and Soviet Union agree to halt immediately the testing, production and deployment of all nuclear warheads, missiles and delivery systems, and,
> 2) Requesting Congress to transfer the funds saved to civilian use.[84]

Once the question was officially assured a place on the November ballot, activists stepped up what became a nine-month campaign. While activists handed out

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[81] Memo: "Tips for Petitioners", Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collections.

[82] Telephone interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

[83] Undated newspaper clipping (probably Valley Advocate) *circa* Fall, 1980. Frances Crowe Private Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

[84] "Yes on 7" flier, *circa* Fall, 1980. Frances Crowe Private Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

freeze fliers on street corners and sympathetic clergy wove disarmament themes into their services, a Springfield-based billboard firm, the Radding Sign Co. donated six area billboards to the newly formed "Yes! On 7 Campaign". Samuel Orleans of the Radding Sign Co. told a reporter, "We feel it's a logical issue whether we agree or disagree."[85] One large billboard depicted the symbolic silhouettes of a man and woman each holding the hand of a single child between them, with the horizontal silhouettes of nuclear missiles pointed at the family and the lines "Vote Yes on Question 7" across the top of the billboard.[86] Anywhere crowds gathered freeze proponents were likely to be present, including the U.S Army exhibit depicting the White Sands Missile Range at the Three County Fair in Hadley. Frances Crowe and fourteen others AFSC members picketed the exhibit despite being repeatedly asked to leave for having "no permit" to demonstrate. Crowe denounced the exhibit to a reporter, calling it part of the "Pentagon's advertising campaign... [to] justify a soaring defense budget and to get people to accept the inevitability of a limited nuclear war."[87]

Freeze proponents also fanned out to malls and other public gathering spots to conduct an "Arms Race Survey", a nominal information gathering effort really aimed at winning support for the freeze. Volunteers would approach passersby and ask, "Hi, do you have a minute to answer four questions on the nuclear arms race?" They would then fill out an individual card based on the respondent's answers and give the respondent the

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[85] Daily Hampshire Gazette, October 3. 1980.

[86] *Ibid.*

[87] Daily Hampshire Gazette, September 2, 1980.

"right" answers. The questions were all designed to dramatize the dangers of the nuclear arms race and need for a freeze.[88]

The western Massachusetts freeze campaign sought to highlight religious and economic themes in its fliers and other forms of public outreach. According to one estimate, the "Yes on 7" campaign had over 300 volunteers leafleting throughout the area who handed out an estimated 60,000 fliers.[89] One flier, entitled "A Christian Response of 'Yes' to Question 7", quoted Rev. Father Leo James Hoar of the Campus Ministry Diocese of Springfield:

> We in western Mass have a glorious moral value to share with the rest of the United States... We here in western Massachusetts are the first community of people having a referendum which offers the choice to the people as to whether or not they want to live with the Russians in peace or we and the Russians will die at about the same time via a nuclear war. And I am all for living – living in peace... On November 4th – when we vote "yes" to Question #7, we shall be giving flesh to the faith of Church teachings.[90]

Another pamphlet tailored toward religious sensibilities entitled "A New Spirit" began with Isaiah's biblical quote of 'pounding swords into ploughshares", then quoted local minister Robert McAfee Brown of the United Church of Christ, who declared, "The life of faith in service to God is in direct contradiction to the life of fear in service

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[88] "Arms Race Survey". Some of the cards with answers and comments are in the Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection. The questions were: 1) With our present nuclear stockpile, government officials estimate we can kill every Soviet citizen: a) once, b) 10 times over, c) 40 times over, d) 60 times over; 2) Which nation has forged all of the major advances in the arms race? a) Soviet Union, b) United States, c) Both led some advances; 3) About 40% of our federal budgets is used for military spending. How do large military budgets affect the economy? a) Stops Unemployment, b) Aids Free Enterprise, c) Creates Unemployment and Inflation, d) Lowers taxes; 4) Over the next five years, the average family of four will spend at least how much on nuclear weapons? a) about $500, b) about $1,000, c) about $5,000, d) about $8,000.

[89] "Saneworld: A Newsletter of Action on Disarmament and the Peace Race", January, 1981. Frances Crowe Private Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

[90] "A Christian Response to Question 7". Pamphlet. Frances Crowe Private Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

to nuclear armaments."[91] Similar endorsements by local clergy, including Rabbi David Saperstein, preceded the pamphlet's featured quote, a 1979 statement to Sojourners by the nationally renowned evangelical minister, Rev. Billy Graham. Graham, a confidant of presidents and well-known anti-communist, surprised conservatives by endorsing the freeze early on, thereby bestowing a good deal of legitimacy on the freeze in Middle America:

> The present insanity of the global arms race, if continued, will lead inevitably to a conflagration so great that Auschwitz will seem like a minor rehearsal... Is nuclear holocaust inevitable if the arms race is not stopped? Frankly, the answer is almost certainly yes... The nuclear arms race is not just a political issue – it is a moral and spiritual issue as well.[92]

Alongside religious themes, proponents of the freeze sought to connect the arms race to economic issues, a compelling approach in a country shaken by almost a decade of ongoing economic dislocation. (Indeed the freeze movement's national trajectory would run nearly parallel to the recession of the early 1980s.) To do this, Traprock activists sought to introduce the national work of William Winpinsinger into the western Massachusetts campaign. Winpinsinger was the president of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) The IAM president had become co-chair of SANE and beginning in 1979 sought to merge the issues of jobs and the nuclear arms race. Winpinsinger commissioned a study, which issued its findings in a 1979 report entitled, "The Impact of Military Spending on the Machinist Union".[93] Based largely on Bureau of Labor Statistics sources, the report concluded that defense spending, especially for

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[91] "A New Spirit". Pamphlet. *Circa* October, 1980. Frances Crowe Private Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

[92] *Ibid.*

[93] Valley Advocate. October 1, 1980.

nuclear weapons, was capital intensive and that one billion dollars converted from defense to civilian spending would result in far more jobs being created. In statistics that the western Massachusetts movement disseminated in numerous fliers, the IAM report concluded that such a conversion could create 187,299 education jobs, 138,939 healthcare jobs, 100,072 construction jobs, 92,071 mass transit jobs as compared to the 75,710 jobs created by military spending. Overall, the report concluded that, on average, for every one billion dollars of defense spending converted to civilian spending, 14,000 new jobs would be created.[94] Winpinsinger wrote to members of SANE:

> For years we've been sold a bill of goods about the "beneficial effects" of military spending. The arms budget has been viewed as a giant public works program to stimulate the economy and provide jobs and income. We now know the truth. Far from aiding prosperity, excessive arms spending weakens civilian industry and is a major cause of inflation and unemployment.[95]

Randy Kehler and others in Traprock hoped to attract the support of local labor organizations. "We want to work with union locals because these groups are mobilized when they realize that military spending costs jobs," Kehler told a local reporter.[96] The "Yes on 7" campaign's major union support came from the local United Electrical Workers Union, based in Pittsfield, a longtime leftist union headed by organizer/activist David Cohen.[97] Despite the jobs focus, the western Massachusetts freeze movement, as would be the case nationally, ran into ambivalence among organized labor who saw in

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[94] *Ibid.* The I.A.M. report also concluded that between 1975-8, the top 100 defense contractors with I.A.M. contracts received an increase of $5 billion from the Pentagon, while the Machinist Union suffered a net loss of 12,000 jobs.

[95] *Ibid.*

[96] Undated newspaper clipping (probably Valley Advocate) *circa* October 1980. Box 5, Folder 33, MS 80. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[97] Traprock Report, Vol. II, #2, April, 1981. Traprock Peace Center Records.

the movement a potential threat to jobs and heard echoes of the previous decade's movement against nuclear energy. A local reporter noted that "spokesmen for local labor organizations… gave the [freeze] proposal mixed reviews."[98]

In concert with the freeze movement's focus on jobs was the impact the arms race had on human services and other cherished social programs. Here, the activists sought to make the cost of the arms race tangible by citing its impact on specific local programs. Frances Crowe asked one local reporter, "Why should we be spending all that money for weapons we cannot use? We need the money for human services – for day care and health care – right here in Northampton."[99] One "Yes on 7" flier depicted a pie with 47% of the federal budget allocated to defense related costs, then itemized recent cuts (pre-Reagan) to a number of social programs such as Title 20 Child Care Funding, CETA and many others, concluding, "The list goes on! Services can only be maintained by increasing local taxes or by organized efforts to cut military spending."[100] Speakers at a three-day teach-in at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, drove home the economic linkage between tough times and a runaway arms race. Renowned political scientist, Columbia Professor Seymour Melman, whose life work focused on the military-industrial complex, told the students, "The permanent war economy has become the prime source of the inflation and unemployment we now endure."[101] Another

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[98] Undated newspaper article, *circa* October, 1980. Frances Crowe Private Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

[99] *Ibid.*

[100] "Yes on 7" flier, *circa* October, 1980. Frances Crowe Private Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

[101] Daily Collegian. *circa* October 1980. Frances Crowe Private Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

speaker, Johnetta Cole, inveighed, "We need low income housing, not housing for death in the shape of an MX missile."[102]

In its emphasis on religious and economic themes, the western Massachusetts freeze campaign prefigured the national movement to come. It did likewise with a tactic that would be employed across the United States and was being used increasingly by the west European peace movement: endorsement of its position by professional organizations. The "Yes on 7 Campaign" reached out to doctors and nurses, lawyers and educators, social workers and artists, winning endorsements from a host of their professional associations. The endorsements often were accompanied by paid "signature ads" printed in local newspapers. The tactic was immensely popular and effective. First, it introduced the arms race and the freeze proposal as points of discussion in these organizations, making them "water cooler topics" on the job. Second, professional endorsements helped move freeze support deeper into the mainstream. Third, the signature ads, which often included hundreds of local names, personalized support for the freeze. Lastly, associations could give their own professional vantage point on the freeze. Thus, educators could discuss the impact of the arms race on children, psychologists could assess the impact on Americans' mental health, scientists could focus on the destructive power of nuclear weapons, and social workers could focus on cuts to social programs. The 1980 western Massachusetts campaign featured numerous professional endorsements and signature ads. Among the most effective professional endorsements were those that came from doctors and nurses, repositories of great public trust. One full-page ad sponsored by the "Yes on 7 Campaign" appearing in the Daily

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[102] *Ibid.*

Hampshire Gazette, included the signatures of over 100 area health professionals, mostly doctors and registered nurses. The ad first discussed the impact the arms race had on health services, stating, "... the continued expansion of the military budget for the development and production of nuclear weapons drains funds from much needed health and social service programs."[103] The ad then went on to discuss the medical implications of nuclear war. Nationally, Dr. Helen Caldicott had done much in her controversial lectures to introduce the American public to the gruesome medical affects to be expected from a nuclear blast and radioactive fallout, and the degree to which medical professionals would be helpless to deal with such carnage. Echoing Caldicott's views, the doctors and nurses' ad in the Daily Hampshire Gazette declared that in the event of nuclear war, "There is no possible effective medical response except to administer stockpiles of morphine."[104]

The "Yes on 7 Campaign" conducted a savvy press and media campaign, procuring a surprising amount of local coverage during a presidential election year in which voters would face a crowded ballot, including seven ballot questions. The latter included the hotly debated Proposition 2 1/2, a statewide proposal to reduce local property taxes based on the 1978 Proposition 13 in California, credited with setting off the national "taxpayer revolt" then reaching Massachusetts.[105] The freeze campaign placed paid ads in all the area's major local newspapers, all eleven radio stations and received coverage from the three regional television networks. The local press and media

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[103] Daily Hampshire Gazette, October 31, 1980.

[104] *Ibid.*

[105] Carroll, 324-5.

covered the campaign regularly, conducted interviews with freeze activists and published numerous letters-to-the-editor on the freeze campaign, some occasionally devoting full pages to letters discussing the freeze (the letters ran heavily pro-freeze.) Overall, the "Yes on 7 Campaign" was able to project a sympathetic image to the public, and convey its main points successfully through the press and media.[106] By election day, the "Yes on 7 Campaign" had won the endorsement of most the area press, including The Morning Union, Berkshire Eagle, Greenfield Recorder, Valley Advocate and the moderately conservative Springfield Republican which lasso endorsed Ronald Reagan for president.[107]

Although the western Massachusetts freeze campaign maintained its local focus, keeping community supporters in the forefront, at least one national figure was brought in to stump for question #7. Daniel Ellsberg, the famous leaker of the Pentagon Papers in 1971, had joined Dave Dellinger and other 1960s activists in the mid-1970s to form Mobilization for Survival (MfS), a group modeled on the Vietnam-era's "Mobe" (Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam). The group declared its mission was "to put back on the political agenda what had been lost in the Vietnam years: an awareness of the threat of nuclear holocaust."[108] In 1979, Randall Forsberg first proposed her version of a nuclear weapons freeze at a convention of 600 MfS members. Although the western Massachusetts campaign was launched independently of the national movement, Kehler, Crowe and other local activists kept national organizations apprised of their progress.

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[106] Meyer, 173-5.

[107] Morning Union, *circa* November 1-3, 1980. Frances Crowe Private Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

[108] Meyer, 147.

For their part, national figures watched the "Yes on 7 Campaign" closely, seeing it as a pilot program to test the appeal of the freeze with mainstream voters.[109]

In the fall of 1980, Daniel Ellsberg came to western Massachusetts to speak on behalf of the freeze at area colleges, where the former Defense Department official turned activist was a popular draw. Ellsberg came at the request of Kehler, whom he had known since the late 1960s, when Ellsberg says Kehler's willingness to go to jail to oppose the war influenced his decision to leak the Pentagon Papers.[110] Ellsberg barnstormed the area in the weeks leading up to the election. "We can stop setting the example (of) encouraging the reliance on nuclear weapons (as a defense) strategy… We've set the worst possible example for the last thirty-five years and that has kept us from using our weight diplomatically against nuclear proliferation," Ellsberg told students at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.[111] After sharing the concerns voiced by several students over President Carter's recent re-introduction of Selective Service registration, Ellsberg fielded questions about the upcoming presidential election. What is interesting, is the degree to which the local freeze movement rarely mentioned Ronald Reagan in 1980, given the right-wing Republican's hard-line anti-Soviet stance and call for an even greater arms build up than the one currently under way. Much of the liberal-left spectrum in the United States continued to focus anger and betrayal at Carter's hard-line turn in 1978, which only grew more belligerent as the 1980 election approached. Asked by students where he stood on the presidential contest, Ellsberg

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[109] *Ibid.*, 173-5. Kehler informed western Massachusetts activists, national leaders saw the November referendum as a "bellwether of the whole moratorium movement"; Traprock fundraising letter. October 15, 1980. Series 1, Box 1, Folder 1, MS 80. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[110] Telephone Interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

[111] Valley Advocate, October 15, 1980.

expressed a common ambivalence among progressives: "I would have to say what they're offering us is the same arms race. It gets down to which one would most likely break his promises. Carter has broken so many promises already, maybe he'll break his promise to go ahead with the MX missile. On that basis, I'd have to vote against Reagan."[112] At another forum, Ellsberg stated, "I see a threat going with Carter or Reagan." He would, however, vote for Carter, Ellsberg continued, because at least Carter didn't "celebrate the arms race".[113] Beyond the presidential election, however, Ellsberg's main message was for his audience to go out and vote for the freeze: "I hope western Mass' will show the way. I hope two years from now there will be a referendum on every ballot in every state."[114]

The western Massachusetts freeze movement also confronted another issue, which would face the national freeze movement over the coming years, anti-communism. The 1980 presidential election was one marked by strident anti-Soviet rhetoric from both the Carter and Reagan campaigns. By the turn of the decade, the improved U.S.-Soviet relations ushered in by *détente* had given way to tensions reminiscent of the early years of the cold war. The "Yes on 7" campaign thus had to promote an end to the arms race in an election year where anti-communist rhetoric reached peak volume.[115]

In western Massachusetts, freeze activists challenged the basic premises of U.S. cold war ideology, while remaining critical of both the United States and Soviet Union.

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[112] *Ibid.*

[113] Morning Union, October 7, 1980.

[114] Valley Advocate, October 15, 1980.

[115] Carroll, 339-50.

To one reporter, Kehler declared, "We don't naively believe the Soviets have peaceful intensions..."[116] Yet, while critical of the Soviet Union, freeze activists worked to deflate the image of the Soviet Union as an inveterately expansionist power bent on world domination. For many peace activists, the idea of the "Red Menace" was an exaggeration used to prop up the military-industrial complex and perpetuate the arms race. Marta Daniels of the AFSC, back from her second trip to the U.S.S.R., told a gathering of Traprock activists in September, 1980, that a "powerful segment of our population (military and industrial) has a vested interest in the maintenance of the Soviet threat."[117] Earlier in the year, Randy Kehler stated to a reporter from the Greenfield Recorder:

> ... The current saber rattling about a new 'Russian threat' is nothing but election rhetoric. Though the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan must be condemned, thus far the scale and duration of it in no way compare to our own invasion of Vietnam. We forget that Russia and its Eastern European client states are almost completely surrounded by hostile neighbors... In short, Russia is hardly on the verge of taking over Western Europe, overrunning the rest of the Third World or launching a war against the U.S.[118]

The "Yes on 7" campaign sought to address questions concerning the Soviet Union head on. One flier entitled "Behind the Scenes: The Myth of the Soviet Threat" discussed corporate profits from defense spending and exposed the role of New Right organizations like the Committee on the Present Danger in promoting the new "Red

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[116] Valley Advocate October 1, 1980.

[117] Daily Hampshire Gazette, September 12, 1980.

[118] Greenfield Recorder, February 2, 1980.

Scare".[119] Another flier entitled, "But What About the Russians?" equated the United States and Soviet Union's respective imperialisms. It stated:

> Both nations are seeking control of scarce world resources. Since World War II, both nations have used military intervention, propaganda and scare tactics to maintain and expand their influence. Like the Soviets, we have consistently interfered in the affairs of other nations... The recent Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to preserve the shaky pro-Soviet government, far from gaining them leadership in the Third World, has earned the Soviets near universal condemnation and has brought them into conflict with the non-aligned nations.[120]

The freeze movement also worked to humanize Soviet citizens. Over the coming years, several Massachusetts towns would declare themselves "sister cities" with towns and cities in the Soviet Union, as part of a campaign promoted by another American arms control organization, "Ground Zero".[121] Several Traprock activists themselves would visit the Soviet Union and others would join national letter writing campaigns to the Soviet leadership, calling for the release of imprisoned Soviet peace activists.[122] On

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[119] "Behind the Scenes: The Myth of the Soviet Threat", pamphlet. Frances Crowe Papers, Northampton, Massachusetts.

[120] "But What About the Russians?" Pamphlet. Frances Private Crowe Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts; a copy is also available in the Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[121] Traprock Report. Vol. IV, #1, January, 1984.

[122] Traprock's Meg Gage was among those who visited the U.S.SR. Gage met with an "unofficial" Soviet disarmament group, which, though not anti-government, was viewed with suspicion by the government. Gage described the group as "rhetorical and guarded" during official meetings and "candid" during their unmonitored breaks. Gage found her Soviet hosts friendly, but noted "a lack of information available to the Soviet people." She believed, however, that her peace mission to the U.S.S.R. met with "some success". Traprock Report. Vol. III, # 10, July, 1983. One example of a nationally circulated letter signed by U.S. peace activists and sent to the Soviet leadership, was an appeal for the release of Sergei Batovrin in 1982. The letter read in part: "We welcome the recent Soviet renunciation of first use of nuclear weapons. However, it belies the Soviet claim to be 'peace loving' when independent Soviet peace activists – our brothers and sisters in the movement –are labeled as 'provocative', 'illegal' and 'anti-social'... As activists opposed to actions by the Reagan administration that would escalate the arms race, we the undersigned call upon you to release SERGEI BATOVRIN, now interned in a psychiatric hospital, and to cease harassment of other independent activists and allow their voices to be heard on this most vital of issues – the issue of survival in the shadow of nuclear war." Traprock Report, Vol. III, #5, September, 1982.

the whole, the western Massachusetts freeze movement, by maintaining a critical stance toward both superpowers and emphasizing a shared global humanity over an ideologically divided world, helped keep the focus on the arms race itself and its cost to both societies.

The major element of the national movement foreshadowed in the 1980 western Massachusetts freeze campaign was its electoral strategy. Randy Kehler repeatedly emphasized that the goal was to produce a locally based mass movement that would be "large enough to cause national leaders to take heed."[123] Although the movement against nuclear energy made forays into electoral politics, predominantly through antinuclear referenda, the movement remained focused primarily on direct action or legal interventions. More than most movements of the 1970s and 1980s, the freeze movement kept an eye on influencing elected representatives, working to win their endorsements of a freeze. In the 1980 campaign, the immediate focus was on three state senators, John Olver (Franklin and Hampshire Counties), Martin Reilly (Hamden County) and Peter Webber (Berkshire County) who were to be instructed by the referendum to introduce a freeze resolution in the state senate. The movement also worked relentlessly on western Massachusetts' congressman, Silvio Conte, a well-liked moderate Republican.[124]

Much of the focus in the 1980 campaign was on Democrat John Olver, whose district encompassed many freeze strongholds such as Amherst, Northampton and Deerfield. Early in the campaign, Olver stated that although he supported arms control efforts, he doubted the freeze was "verifiable", sounding a theme that would be heard

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[123] Traprock Report, Vol. II, #1, February, 1981. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[124] Traprock Report, Vol. I, #5, November, 1980. Traprock Peace Center Records.

over and over by opponents of the freeze in coming years.[125] Conte likewise expressed reservations. As the election neared and the freeze movement seemed to garner a growing groundswell of support, however, both politicians came out in support of the freeze, although Kehler would later refer to Conte's belated endorsement as "somewhat reluctant".[126] Looking back on Olver's actions during this period, Frances Crowe stated that Olver was never "a leader" but "a follower".[127] Within months, however, Olver would find himself the point man in the campaign to win endorsement of the freeze from the Massachusetts legislature, and Conte would find himself torn between his increasingly conservative national political party and strongly pro-freeze constituency. Both Conte and Olver were the first Bay State politicians swept along by the rising tide of the freeze movement. By 1983, both houses of the state legislature, the governor, and all twelve members of the Massachusetts congressional delegation would endorse the freeze.

On November 4, 1980, voters in western Massachusetts' three state senatorial districts voted 59% to 41% in favor of a nuclear weapons freeze. In Olver's district, an astonishing 64.5% of the electorate endorsed the freeze proposal. The numbers were likewise high in Berkshire County where 59.2% of the voters said "yes" to question #7. In the sections of more conservative Hamden County that voted on the freeze, 50.5% voted for the moratorium. Overall, 59 of 62 towns voting endorsed the freeze. Yet, in a vote that perplexed many, the same region of western Massachusetts which endorsed the

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[125] Daily Hampshire Gazette, October 30, 1980.

[126] Randy Kehler and Gordon Faisson, Memo, "To: Active Participants in the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign", July 22, 1981. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[127] Interview with Frances Crowe, April 24, 1996.

freeze likewise narrowly cast the majority of its votes for Ronald Reagan, with 33 of 62 towns voting for the conservative Republican.[128] The freeze, however, garnered a majority of votes in almost all the towns that went for Reagan as well. Some observers believed that going into the election Reagan's strength was more on the economic front, and that his strident anti-communism was a source of concern to voters that Reagan only helped alleviate late in the campaign by his more statesman-like demeanor during his televised debate with Carter a week before the election. This could possibly explain the mixed message sent by voters. Or one could also see in the western Massachusetts vote an across-the-board rejection of the *status quo*, although local incumbents like Conte were all re-elected.[129]

Days before the November 1980 vote, Randy Kehler confidently predicted, "Our work is going to send a signal around the country about how Americans feel about the arms race."[130] Frances Crowe, in a 1983 speech, described a less optimistic feeling: "Election night we gathered to celebrate our work... but certainly not in expectation of victory. Some of us thought maybe twenty-five percent would vote for the freeze. As the news came in that Reagan was winning, the polls also reported that we were winning!"[131] If many liberals and radicals across the United States were despondent at the results of the presidential election, supporters of a nuclear weapons freeze were elated at the overwhelming popular endorsement of their proposal in western

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[128] Daily Hampshire Gazette, November 5, 1980.

[129] Meyers, 173-5.

[130] Daily Hampshire Gazette, October 3, 1980.

[131] "A Journey of Conscience", Frances Crowe draft speech, *circa* 1983. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

Massachusetts. To the Nation, Kehler proclaimed, "This vote in western Massachusetts shows that the American public is indeed receptive to proposals for stopping the arms race. The issue of nuclear arms transcends party lines and liberal *vs.* conservative divisions… noone wants a nuclear war."[132] Adi Bemak, long-time peace activist with the Amherst Disarmament Coalition and "Yes on 7" organizer, declared, "The campaign's success in votes gathered indicates that grassroots organizing on a complex and formidable national issue is possible and demonstrates the impact people just talking to people can have."[133]

Just weeks before the November vote, Kehler, Frances Crowe and other Massachusetts activists met with over forty national arms control and disarmament advocates on the eighth floor of U.N Plaza in New York City. Kehler returned to western Massachusetts, and told local freeze supporters, "I found that nearly everyone at the meeting had not only heard about the western Massachusetts referendum, but they said they viewed it as the bellwether of the whole moratorium movement, the first real test anywhere in the country of the public's reaction to the moratorium proposal."[134] For Kehler, the "Yes on 7" campaign had tested the political waters and found Americans receptive to ending the arms race. Kehler and others now sought to ballyhoo the western Massachusetts campaign as a model that could be transplanted across America:

> … Our success in western Massachusetts, an area diverse enough to be fairly representative of the country as a whole, means that the American public is indeed receptive to constructive bilateral proposals for ending

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[132] The Nation, December 6, 1980.

[133] Amherst News, November 13, 1980.

[134] Traprock fundraising letter, October 15, 1980. Traprock Peace Center Records.

the insanely dangerous nuclear arms race despite the electorate's apparent rightward shift.[135]

After the vote, Daniel Ellsberg promised to tell "the western Massachusetts story" coast to coast. The story, however, seemed to spread rapidly immediately after the November election. Freeze pioneer, Oregon Senator Mark Hatfield wrote to Traprock, "I want to send you my congratulations for your successful referendum campaign in Western Massachusetts... I understand that the proposition... was approved by a decisive majority. This is greatly encouraging."[136] Traprock was inundated within a week with requests for information coming from around the country, especially from pacifist religious groups. Recalling the aftermath of the vote, Frances Crowe said, "Then mail came in from all over the country asking how we had done it..."[137] An AFSC member from Seattle, Washington, Anne Willard, wrote Traprock, "I just read about your wonderful campaign in my Christianity and Crisis... congratulations on your hard work and on the very positive results. If you have details of the campaign that you are willing to send, I would appreciate very much receiving them. I hope to be able to make good use of them..."[138] From Bloomington, Indiana a woman wrote, "Word is spreading of your successful referendum on the arms race! [which is] raising much enthusiasm in our local [AFSC] meeting that perhaps some such movement could be started in Indiana. We realize, however, that much hard work went into your campaign, and would

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[135] Traprock Report, Vol. I, #5, November, 1980. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[136] Mark O. Hatfield to Western Massachusetts "Yes on 7" Committee, c/o Traprock, March 9, 1981. Frances Crowe papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[137] "A Journey of Conscience", Frances Crowe Draft Speech *circa* 1983. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[138] Anne Willard to Frances Crowe, *circa* November/December, 1980. Frances Crowe Private Papers, Northampton, Massachusetts.

appreciate any tactics that you could share with us. Specifically we wonder about the best approach to community, which leaders are best to approach, effective outreach techniques, which facts/arguments/issues seemed to impress people most, *etc.*"[139] According to Traprock's Judith Scheckel, "We have received requests for information on how to conduct a referendum like this one from fourteen other states and church groups like the Mennonites, Presbyterians and *Pax Christi* (a Catholic Peace Group)."[140]

As word spread of the western Massachusetts success story, freeze support spread like wild fire up the Connecticut River Valley as over fourteen Vermont towns voted in town meetings to endorse a nuclear weapons freeze in the months following the November election.[141] Town meetings across western Massachusetts soon did the same transforming the region into a bastion of solidly pro-freeze sentiment. Cambridge joined the trend in the spring of 1981 with its endorsement of the freeze.[142] As Randy Kehler moved to St. Louis to take charge of a newly formed national freeze movement, organizers in western Massachusetts began their efforts to turn all of Massachusetts into a nuclear weapons freeze fortress. Traprock, the Amherst Disarmament Coalition and others involved in the "Yes on 7 Campaign" branched out across the state making contacts with other local Massachusetts disarmament groups, especially in Cambridge,

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[139] Ruth Sanders to AFSC Western Massachusetts Regular Office, *circa* November/December 1980. Frances Crowe Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

[140] Valley Advocate, March 18, 1981.

[141] Traprock Report, Vol. II, #2, April, 1981. Traprock Peace Center Records ; Valley Advocate, March 18, 1981.

[142] Boston Globe, March 25, 1984. The article reviews the movement in Cambridge from 1981 through 1984.

and formed the Massachusetts Coalition for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze.[143] Working with elected officials in the Commonwealth, they were soon to turn Massachusetts into the flagship state of the national nuclear weapons freeze movement.

The Massachusetts Legislature's Nuclear Weapons Freeze Resolution, Spring 1981

A week after the election, the Traprock Report proclaimed, "We did it! [Our state senators] have a popular mandate to carry the nuclear weapons moratorium proposal to the State House in Boston."[144] Liberal Democratic state senator John Olver had gone from initial skepticism toward the nuclear weapons freeze proposal to endorsing it as the movement gathered strength. After western Massachusetts voters resoundingly approved the freeze in November 1980, Olver transformed himself almost overnight into the movement's chief elected advocate on Boston's Beacon Hill. Olver coordinated his efforts closely with Traprock. Weeks after the vote, Olver wrote Traprock members, "As my aide, Stan Rosenberg, indicated during his visit with you at the Traprock Peace Center, I intend to file with the Senate Clerk by December 3 the Resolution related to Ballot Question #7... I understand that optimally you would like to see the matter acted upon between the third week of March and the end of April to coincide with other activities of interest to your group. I will do my best to see that it comes before the Senate during that period."[145] As promised, Olver and Springfield Democrat Alan Sisitsky co-sponsored a freeze resolution in the Massachusetts Senate in early

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[143] Traprock Report, Vol. II, # 1, February, 1981. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[144] Traprock Report, Vol. I, # 5, November, 1980. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[145] John Olver to Traprock Peace Center Staff and Colleagues, November 25, 1980. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

December.[146] Olver took the freeze movement's case to his colleagues in the state capital, declaring,

> Are we really more secure knowing that we and our adversaries can destroy each other many times over in a matter of hours?... I think not. I know of no one who would argue against adequate defense. However, we must ask ourselves, defense at what risks?... What have we to lose if both the United States and Soviet Union agree to a verifiable nuclear arms moratorium?[147]

As the freeze debate evolved, Olver found himself most comfortable with the movement's emphasis on the social costs of the arms race. In a statement, which seemed to draw on William Winpinsinger's I.A.M. report, Olver stated, "The same billion dollars [spent on nuclear weapons] put to civilian use will employ 73,000 police, 76,000 teachers or 85,000 nurses."[148] Olver and his allies in the state senate introduced Senate Resolution #455, which called upon the President of the United States to propose to the U.S.S.R. a nuclear weapons moratorium and to transfer the funds saved to civilian use.[149] Lobbying hard for the resolution were activists from the Massachusetts Coalition for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze, including many veterans of the western Massachusetts campaign. As debate unfolded, eastern Massachusetts activists increasingly weighed in, with the Cambridge city council endorsing a nuclear weapons freeze on March 16, 1981 and a Boston-based group "Jobs With Peace" successfully lobbying for a companion resolution to Res. # 455, Res. # 454 which would have the state legislature call on the federal government to cease "unnecessary spending" on new military programs and to

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[146] Daily Hampshire Gazette, December 14, 1980.

[147] *Ibid.*

[148] Greenfield Recorder, June 11, 1981.

[149] Traprock Report, Vol. II, #1, February, 1981. Traprock Peace Center Records.

Another religious figure to speak for the freeze was Robert Hillegass of the Massachusetts Council of Churches, who declared, "Such a nuclear policy [of deterrence through massive retaliation], which holds humanity and the earth itself hostage is evidently a crime against humanity and God."[155]

The state legislature's Joint Federal Financial Assistance Committee approved the resolutions, which were then passed in the Massachusetts Senate on May 18 and the Massachusetts House of Representatives on June 9.[156] While Olver shepherded the resolution through the senate – aided by numerous pro-freeze lobbyists – Greenfield state representative, Democrat William Benson worked for passage in the house, telling colleagues, "We have to take a serious look at what we're doing and [determine] if, in the long run, it's sane."[157] Thus, only eight months after voters in the western half of the state expressed their support for a nuclear weapons freeze, the Massachusetts legislature went on record endorsing a new direction for the nation, just as it had been the first to do in 1970 when that same body passed a resolution calling for U.S. withdrawal from the ongoing war in Vietnam. The Coalition for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze drew attention to the historical parallel in a press release: "The Coalition is encouraged knowing that in 1970, the Massachusetts Legislature voted for a resolution calling for an end to the Vietnam War. That vote was the first such vote by a state legislature – it helped catalyze public acceptance of opposition to the war… The nuclear freeze vote is another

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[155] "Excerpts of Testimony", March 30, 1981. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[156] Greenfield Recorder, June 11, 1981.

[157] *Ibid.*

historical first."[158] Freeze activists were elated by their rapid progress on the state level. Eugene Angus, a professor of literature at Western New England College and member of the Amherst Disarmament Coalition, declared after the vote, "We are telling Reagan in no uncertain terms that we as a state are serious about this... It was very gratifying to see the state legislature do this."[159]

The Massachusetts Statewide Freeze Resolution, November 1982

By 1982, the freeze movement was taking the United States by storm, becoming a nightly topic on the evening news and taking up increasing space in the nation's newspapers, periodicals and public discourse. In an endorsement of the freeze, the Boston Globe declared, "Almost suddenly, a new political movement is blowing in the wind from coast to coast. It's called the 'freeze' movement... To the amazement of national security specialists and others who have lobbied for years in the dusty bins of arms control, the freeze looks like it's going to be a political heavyweight. A few months ago most observers of the American scene would have said that a responsible, credible, politically effective 'peace movement' was years away."[160] On June 12, 1982, over 850,000 Americans rallied peacefully for a nuclear weapons freeze in New York City in what many consider one of the largest peace demonstration in U.S. history.[161]

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[158] "Massachusetts Legislature Adopts a Nuclear Weapons Freeze Resolution", Massachusetts Coalition for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze Press Release, June 9, 1981. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[159] Amherst Bulletin, July 8, 1981.

[160] Boston Globe, March 15, 1982.

[161] Meyer, 184-91.

In the Commonwealth, the Massachusetts Coalition for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze worked hard to build on the momentum of the previous two years to keep the Bay State at the cutting edge of the national freeze movement. Senator Edward Kennedy's staff had recently contacted Randy Kehler and was working to align the senator closer to both Massachusetts and national freeze organizations.[162] The minutes of a Western Massachusetts Coalition for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze meeting at which Frances Crowe, Pauline Bassett and Judith Sheckel were present, reveal that Senator Kennedy was behind the idea to put the freeze on a statewide referendum the following November. The minutes state: "Senator Kennedy had suggested to the group of Massachusetts freeze workers who met with him several weeks ago that Massachusetts have a statewide referendum on the freeze. The Council for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze in Cambridge has been working with the legislature to place the freeze on the November ballot."[163] The movement thus set as its goal for 1982 a freeze referendum to be voted on statewide in the November elections. If the movement could win a place for a freeze referendum on the ballot, it would make Massachusetts one of nine states placing the freeze on a statewide ballot that year. Since California would be voting on the freeze, the national movement boasted that over 30% of all Americans would be offered a chance to express their views on the freeze at the polls that November.[164]

Once again, the leader in the state senate was John Olver. Olver's western Massachusetts district remained a stronghold of freeze activism in the state. Olver, who

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[162] Telephone Interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

[163] "Minutes: Western Massachusetts Coalition Steering Committee", May 19, 1982. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[164] Traprock Report, Vol. III, #6, November, 1982. Traprock Peace Center Records; Meyer, 111-13.

had given a lukewarm endorsement of the freeze in 1980, had, by 1982, become a crusader for the proposal at the state level. Olver and fellow state senator George Bachrach (D-Watertown) co-drafted a circular letter calling on the state legislature to put a freeze referendum on the November ballot for all Bay State residents to vote on. Olver and Bachrach procured the signatures of 28 state senators and 92 state representatives (over half the state's House of Representatives), many of whom were lobbied relentlessly by freeze activists. The Olver circular letter called on the legislature to put to the voters a referendum calling on President Reagan, Secretary of State Alexander Haig and U.S. delegates to the U.N. Disarmament Session, to propose a "prompt freeze... [followed by] scheduled, verifiable, progressive reduction of nuclear weapons arsenals, leading to the eradication and banning of such weapons."[165] The Olver-Bachrach circular letter declared,

> What is required is a strong conventional defense and sensible foreign and economic policies, which will ensure our security... We cannot afford, nor can our adversaries, ever spiraling expenditures on weapons that cannot be used and therefore do not provide security... It is a sham to say that we can afford more for nuclear weapons while depriving the people of this country housing, mass transportation, education and social services...
> So that they may have their share of nuclear weapons the Soviet people stand in line for food and wait years for housing while their government spends a huge share of their gross national product on nuclear arms... So that we may have our share of nuclear weapons our government talks of a five-year military buildup costing $1.5 trillion, while budgets for mass transportation, education, housing and social services are cut.[166]

Unlike the Massachusetts freeze campaigns of 1980 and 1981, where opposition was unorganized and scattered, by 1982, the Reagan administration regularly employed

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[165] The Morning Union, May 27, 1982.

[166] *Ibid.*

the "bully pulpit" to denounce the freeze as "unilateral disarmament" and to redbait the national movement as inspired by Moscow.[167] This emboldened freeze opponents on the state level, who now geared up in Massachusetts to stop the freeze proposal from reaching voters on the state ballot in November 1982. Although the state Senate acted with dispatch, passing the bill to put the freeze on the ballot 36-1, the bill soon ran into trouble in the state's House of Representatives where Republicans and conservative Democrats sought to kill the ballot question through amendments with language designed to alter the question.[168] One representative affixed the wording "unless the president feels it will weaken the United States" to the end of the freeze ballot question passed by the Senate.[169] Representative William Robinson (R-Melrose) added language forbidding freeze negotiations "if militarily disadvantageous to the United States". Representative Marie Howe (D-Somerville) proposed an amendment forbidding negotiations until the Soviet Union withdraws from Afghanistan and pull out of Eastern Europe.[170] Freeze advocate Pauline Bassett sighed in exasperation, "We didn't anticipate this" as freeze activists stepped up their lobbying to break the logjam before the deadline passed for questions to appear on the November ballot.[171] Given their proximity to the statehouse, the Cambridge Council for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze took the lead in

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[167] Meyer, 217.

[168] Greenfield Recorder, July 3, 1982.

[169] *Ibid.*

[170] Greenfield Recorder, August 4, 1982.

[171] Greenfield Recorder, July 3, 1982.

lobbying for the ballot question in the state legislature, making almost daily appearances.[172]

Many charged House Speaker Thomas McGee, a conservative Democrat, with preventing the ballot question from going to a joint conference committee. Democratic candidate for governor Michael Dukakis inserted himself into the dispute, hoping to break the impasse by strongly endorsing the freeze. Speaking before the Kennedy Library in Boston, Dukakis declared:

> Here, with the Kennedy Library behind us, we are reminded of President John Kennedy's successful support in 1963 of a treaty banning all nuclear weapons testing in the air, sea and outer space… Nuclear war cannot be won or survived. It can only be prevented. Let the people of Massachusetts tell the President to seek an agreement with the Soviet Union for a mutual, verifiable freeze on the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons.[173]

The logjam was finally broken when McGee received a letter from the state's national congressional delegation, including Ted Kennedy and U.S. Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill, both of whom were working to promote a freeze resolution at the national level.[174] The conference committee stripped the ballot question of the conservative amendments added in the House and sent it along to the state secretary of state barely in time to make the printing deadline for the November ballot. The freeze question to face Bay State voters – Ballot Question #5 -- read:

> Shall the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts inform the President and the Congress of the United States that it is the desire of the people of Massachusetts to have the government of the United States work vigorously to negotiate a mutual nuclear weapons moratorium and

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[172] *Ibid.*

[173] "Dukakis Urges Support for Nuclear Freeze Resolution", Michael Dukakis for Governor Press Release, August 3, 1982. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[174] Greenfield Recorder, September 27, 1982.

reduction with appropriate verification, with the Soviet Union and other nations?[175]

Massachusetts conservatives were not happy. Several were angry that the same liberal representatives who were pushing to have the freeze included on the ballot were simultaneously opposed to including a referendum question on the death penalty. Democratic State Senator Robert Parker complained, "the issue of capital punishment was delayed in getting on the ballot by the same people who are yelling and screaming to get this [the freeze] on the ballot."[176] (Ultimately, both appeared on the November ballot.) State Senator Robert Hall (R-Fichtburg) denounced the freeze ballot question as a liberal ploy "to bring all the fruit loops out in November."[177] Echoing the red baiting coming out of the administration in Washington, D.C., Representative Royall Switzer (R-Wellesly) inveighed, "The liberals, I sometimes think, are carrying the baggage for the Russians, who want a nuclear freeze because they know how far ahead they are."[178]

The place of the freeze on the statewide ballot was assured with the signature of Governor Ed King, who many called Ronald Reagan's favorite Democrat for his opposition to abortion, support for capital punishment, and pro-business and anti-tax positions. King was gearing up for his own rematch in the upcoming Democratic primaries with former governor Michael Dukakis, who was trying to stage his own political comeback. Although King's conservative streak might have inclined him to oppose the freeze, he clearly saw the proposal's popularity in the state and wisely

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[175] *Ibid.*

[176] *Ibid.*

[177] *Ibid.*

[178] *Ibid.*

avoided handing his more liberal gubernatorial opponent another issue by refusing to sign the bill. King declared simply that he was "against nuclear war, against all war."[179]

The election of 1982 saw the freeze movement hit high tide. Earlier that year, the United States House of Representatives fell two votes short of passing a freeze resolution (206-204).[180] The Democrats picked up a number of seats in the House and Senate that November.[181] Of the nine states voting on the freeze, only Arizona voted it down 59%-41%. In the bellwether state of California, the freeze narrowly passed with 52.5% support. Elsewhere, the freeze proposal's margin of victory was greater. The tallies were: Michigan, 57%; Montana, 57%; New Jersey, 66%; North Dakota, 58%; Oregon, 61.5%; and Rhode Island, 59%. Twenty-nine cities likewise passed freeze resolutions, as did Washington, D.C. Not to be outdone, Massachusetts voters approved the freeze by an astonishing 74%, with every single town in the state registering its approval.[182] Surveying the freeze proposal's coast to coast victories, Traprock's Judith Scheckel exclaimed, "In 1980, after our small referendum victory in western Massachusetts, none of us dreamt that two years later 30% of the country would have an opportunity to vote on the Freeze."[183]

By 1982, Massachusetts had emerged as the freeze movement's most reliable base. All twelve members of the state's congressional delegation in Washington

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[179] *Ibid.* On the King administration, see Richard Gaines and Michael Segal, Dukakis and the Reform Impulse (Boston: Quinlan Press, 1987) 125-36.

[180] Waller, 101-59.

[181] *Ibid.*

[182] Traprock Report, Vol. III, # 6, November, 1982. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[183] *Ibid.*

supported it, the state legislature had given its approval and now nearly three of every four voters in the state expressed their support. The only weak link in Massachusetts politics *vis-à-vis* the freeze was the governor's office where Ed King offered only tacit and unenthusiastic support. That was about to change dramatically.

Nuclear Free Zones, Crisis Relocation Planning and Governor Michael S. Dukakis

The breakdown of *détente* in the late 1970s and ensuing arms buildup was accompanied in the United States by a revived emphasis on civil defense. The Carter administration allocated increased funds for civil defense and called upon the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to work with the states in drawing up more detailed civil defense plans for moving urban residents to rural "host" communities known as "Crisis Relocation Planning" (CRP). As the new Reagan administration undertook its massive nuclear weapons buildup in the early 1980s, it placed even greater emphasis on CRP, incorporating it into its planning for waging and winning a nuclear war. The Reagan administration proposed a record $4.2 billion budget for FEMA's civil defense planning. Not since the days of "duck and cover" drills and fallout shelters of the 1950s and early 1960s, had so much emphasis been placed on civil defense and never in U.S. history had so much money been earmarked for it.[184]

The resurrection of civil defense planning was all the more unnerving to peace advocates since it took place in the context not only of the Reagan administration's arms buildup but the administration's heightened rhetoric about fighting "limited" and "winnable" nuclear wars. The rhetoric was often surreal and frightening. FEMA head

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[184] Meyer, 72-3; Breyman, 54-5; Fitzgerald, 89-90.

Louis Giuffrida said of a nuclear war, "It would be a terrible mess, but it wouldn't be unmanageable."[185] Undersecretary of Defense, T.K. Jones advised that to survive a nuclear war, Americans should "dig a hole, cover it with a couple of doors and then throw three feet of dirt on top."[186] American deaths, Jones argued, could be kept as low as ten million in a nuclear war provided there were "enough shovels to go around."[187] Secretary of State Alexander Haig spoke of firing "nuclear warning shots" and Eugene Rostow proclaimed, "We are living in a pre-war and not a post-war world."[188]

In the early Reagan years, FEMA was officially charged with drawing up plans, in concert with the states, for relocating over 75% of the U.S. population to designated "host" communities. This plan presumed a week's notice. Many critics pointed out that the Soviet Union would likely view such a massive population shift as a sign the United States was preparing for a nuclear war, thus encouraging a Soviet first strike. Nevertheless, the Reagan administration pushed ahead with its civil defense planning, making the administration's talk of planning for winnable nuclear war seem all the more palpable to millions of Americans. Adding to the sense of unreality, FEMA announced that it would work to keep U.S. financial institutions running after a nuclear war and advised relocating Americans to bring their credit cards with them.[189]

These plans made the arms race all the more tangible to those in Massachusetts as they learned details of their state's CRP. Tentatively, much of rural western

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[185] Quoted in Breyman, 55.

[186] *Ibid.*, 43.

[187] *Ibid.*; Meyer, 73.

[188] Breyman, 55.

[189] "Does Civil Defense Make Sense?" Newsweek, April 26, 1982, 31-33.

Massachusetts was designated to be host communities. For example, Amherst was to take in 160,000 residents from the nearby cities of Springfield, Holyoke and Granby. Greenfield was to host 158,000 people from Cambridge.[190]

In the early 1980s, a national movement in opposition to CRP grew side by side with the freeze movement. Once again Massachusetts was at the forefront. Two academic communities led the way, first Cambridge and then Amherst. Cambridge, home to Harvard University, MIT, and other academic institutions, was an upscale town abutting greater Boston. In 1981, members of the Cambridge Council for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze joined other town peace activists to push for some symbolic action to show Cambridge's opposition to CRP. As the state' legislature debated the freeze resolutions of 1981 across the Charles River, 72% of Cambridge voters approved a non-binding resolution declaring Cambridge a nuclear free zone (NFZ) and stating the town's opposition to cooperating with FEMA's CRP in any form.[191] "I am proud to be among those who recognize the fallacy of Cambridge citizens grabbing their credit cards and their wills and driving to Greenfield to escape the horror of nuclear war," Cambridge City Councilor Sandra Graham later declared.[192]

The issue quickly merged with freeze activism in western Massachusetts where the Amherst Disarmament Coalition, the Amherst Ad Hoc Committee on Crisis Relocation Planning, the Committee for a Nuclear Free Amherst and Traprock's Civil Defense Information project led the campaign.[193] The Chair of Amherst Board of

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[190] Morning Union, March 5, 1985.

[191] Boston Globe, March 25, 1984.

[192] Greenfield Recorder, June 11, 1982.

[193] Amherst Bulletin, May 23, 1984.

Selectmen denounced CRP as "a cruel joke to convince people you can survive a nuclear war."[194] At a 1982 hearing with state civil defense officials, a Jewish resident of Amherst, Arthur Lansky, lambasted the state's CRP, comparing such planning to the mentality that had produced genocide earlier in the century:

> The Holocaust was perpetrated by bureaucrats who forgot to ask why, who watched without comment... Having lost family and friends to one holocaust, we are not content to sit by and watch a second nuclear holocaust... We cannot take the one bureaucratic step to accept this plan without becoming complicit in the whole. We cannot accept our assigned stations in the machine of death.[195]

The movement to promote non-cooperation with CRP gathered steam as the freeze movement swept across the country. Cities and town in Europe had begun declaring themselves NFZs in opposition to planned deployment of U.S. Pershing and Cruise missiles, and a growing number of American cities and towns were doing the same.[196] A number, like Amherst, refused to cooperate with their state's CRP. In 1984, Amherst passed one of the nation's most stringent, binding NFZ by-laws. After two hours of raucous debate, the town council voted 101-60 to declare Amherst a NFZ, requiring Amherst to divest all funds from any company involved in the production of nuclear weapons; banning all such corporations from doing business in the town; and banning unclassified research related to nuclear war (the University of Massachusetts had banned all classified research in 1972).[197] Within a year, the town sponsored two pamphlets on CRP, one entitled, "Why There Is No Protecting Against the

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[194] Morning Union, March 5, 1985.

[195] Daily Hampshire Gazette, February 9, 1982.

[196] Breyman, 101-2.

[197] Amherst Bulletin, May 23, 1984.

Consequences of Nuclear War" and another "Why No Steps Short of Nuclear Disarmament Could Protect the Citizens of Amherst from Nuclear War."[198]

By 1984, 58 U.S. cities and towns had declared themselves NFZs, of which 20 were in Massachusetts.[199] Ironically, in 1983, Cambridge residents voted down an effort similar to the one passed a year later in Amherst, which would have made Cambridge's non-binding NFZ proclamation binding.[200] During a petition drive to put the NFZ question on the ballot, Richard Scheuer of the Nuclear Free Cambridge campaign wrote an opinion piece in the Boston Globe explaining the campaign to Cambridge voters:

> A nuclear free zone is an area, which is free of nuclear related activities. Individual communities define nuclear as they wish, and we of the Nuclear Free Cambridge Campaign, which is part of the peace group Mobilization for Survival, are focusing on banning all nuclear weapons from our city. We are saying that we are not going to wait while the government debates arms control measures. We want work on nuclear weapons to stop in Cambridge now, because allowing it to continue is being complicit in the arms race... Just as 19th century abolitionists took a step toward abolishing slavery by refusing to recognize fugitive slave laws in their own communities, Cambridge and other nuclear free areas are taking a step toward disarmament by refusing to be complicit in the arms race.[201]

An organized opposition led by Boston University president John Silber emerged to oppose the proposed NFZ law. At public meetings, the right-wing Boston University president would clap in the face of NFZ supporters, declaring each clap represented 100,000 Afghan refugees. Others argued the bill would impinge on academic freedom and still others argued that the philosophy of defying federal policy behind the NFZ

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[198] Morning Union, March 5, 1985.

[199] Daily Hampshire Gazette, June 6, 1984.

[200] The Sentinel, May 23, 1984.

[201] Boston Globe, April 16, 1983.

movement was too similar in theory to that employed by the white segregationist south during the civil rights era.[202] The proposed Cambridge NFZ would have been the first in the nation to actually disrupt nuclear weapons research. Although the bill would have to be tested in court, the binding referendum would have affected the extensive nuclear weapons research being conducted at Cambridge educational institutions, and impacted Draper Labs, a major nuclear weapons contractor located within the town's limits. In one of the first setbacks for antinuclear weapons activists in Massachusetts, Cambridge voters rejected the NFZ proposal.[203]

A similar fate befell NFZ proponents in Northampton in 1984, who failed to win passage of a NFZ bill which would have impacted that town's Kollmorgen Corporation which had received a $6.2 million contract to make periscopes for Trident nuclear submarines. Local unions mobilized to defend jobs they saw threatened by the proposed NFZ. Trying to put a positive spin on the city council vote, AFSC member Victoria Stafford stated, "It's more important to lay the groundwork with the community and unions and management than it is to demand they give up contracts. We're trying to get a dialogue going." Meanwhile, nearby Leverett, Belchertown and Shutesbury joined the list of town's proclaiming themselves NFZs.[204] It became clear, however, that as the peace movement went beyond symbolic referenda to binding resolutions with real economic consequences, resistance would grow.

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[202] The Sentinel, May 23. 1984.

[203] *Ibid.;* Boston Globe, April 16, 1983.

[204] Daily Hampshire Gazette, June 6, 1984.

The disarmament movement in Massachusetts had its greatest success in opposing state participation in CRP. Individual towns led the way by simply refusing to cooperate with state planners, situating themselves in a legal limbo. But beginning in 1983, opponents of CRP found themselves a friend in the Bay State's newly elected Governor, Michael Dukakis and his Lt. Governor Vietnam veteran John Kerry. During the 1982 campaign, Dukakis condemned CRP as "a Doomsday scheme" and an "attempt to deceive the public into believing that nuclear war is survivable."[205] The Dukakis/Kerry campaign promised that if elected they would make available "the resources of our office to expand and coordinate all local efforts to say 'no' to such a plan."[206] Dukakis won re-election in 1982 after four years out of office in a major political comeback.

Michael Dukakis was first elected to the state legislature in 1964 as one of the young "clean government" reform Democrats then taking on the state's Democratic old guard. Dukakis's 1988 presidential campaign literature later stated, "Angered by the excesses of Joseph McCarthy, and inspired by John Kennedy during his campaign for president, Michael Dukakis became an active participant in state Democratic Party affairs..."[207] Once elected to the legislature from his home district of Brookline, Dukakis prided himself as a progressive, dispassionate technocrat, who worked against corruption, special interests and influence peddling in state government. In the turbulent

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[205] "Massachusetts New Executive Order On Civil Defense", Press Packet, June 28, 1984. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, University Libraries, Archives and Special Collections Department, Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts, Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 71. (Hereinafter cited as Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers.)

[206] *Ibid.*

[207] "Governor Michael S. Dukakis: Background and Accomplishments", *circa* 1988. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 4, Folder 71.

sixties, Dukakis made a name for himself by championing auto insurance reform. Nevertheless, he supported the state legislature's resolution calling for U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam in 1970, and had also won the praise of Massachusetts disarmament groups. Dukakis ran for lieutenant governor in 1970 on a ticket with Boston's liberal mayor Kevin White, who lost the race for governor to liberal Republican Francis Sargent. In the early 1970s, Michael Dukakis became a household name in Massachusetts by moderating the popular political television program, "The Advocates". In 1974, Dukakis won the Democratic nomination for governor and ran slightly to the right of Francis Sargent, defeating the charismatic two-term governor with the help of a worsening economic downturn, anger at Sargent over court mandated busing in Boston.[208]

Dukakis's first term took place during the worst phase of the 1970's economic crisis. Breaking a campaign promise, Dukakis was forced to raise taxes and make painful cuts in social programs to cover a massive budget shortfall hidden by the previous administration. The former infuriated moderates and conservatives, and the latter threw liberals such as state representative Barney Frank into a rage, accusing Dukakis of balancing the budget on the backs of the poor. Others attacked the Dukakis style as aloof and arrogant and criticized his absolute refusal to engage in compromise or any patronage whatsoever. By 1978, although the budget was on a sound footing and the Massachusetts economy improving, and despite the fact that Dukakis had conducted one of the cleanest administrations in memory, voters surprised all observers by electing

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[208] On Michael Dukakis's political career, see Gaines and Segal cited above and Charles Kenney and Robert L. Turner, Dukakis: An American Odyssey (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1988).

conservative businessman and former football player Ed King in the Democratic primary. King easily went on to defeat his Republican opponent in November.[209]

By 1982, Ed King had scandalized Bay State voters with the most corrupt and inept administrations in decades. Almost all of King's most glaring vices seemed to be Dukakis's strongest virtues. During his years out of office, Dukakis had softened his image and worked to repair his damaged relations with business, who felt he had over regulated them, and liberals who still rankled at the harsh budget cuts of the first Dukakis administration. Once elected, Dukakis's second term proved the most successful of his three as he developed a national reputation for his successful welfare, job training and tax reform programs.[210] While Dukakis made a national name with his economic experiments, he also opened the doors of his administration to Massachusetts peace activists.[211]

Beginning in 1983, members of Traprock and other Massachusetts peace organizations began meeting with Dukakis aid MarDee Xifaras and Lt. Governor John Kerry, a former peace activist with Vietnam Veterans Against the War. Until being elected to the United States Senate in 1984, Kerry acted as a bridge between freeze activists and the governor. At a June 27, 1983 meeting, activists proposed to Kerry that the new administration rescind a 1956 executive order making evacuation planning part of the state's civil defense policy; withhold state funds from all civil defense activity; create an executive position in the Commonwealth to promote prevention of nuclear

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[209] *Ibid.*

[210] *Ibid.*

[211] *Ibid.*

war; and have the governor to lead opposition to CRP at meetings of the national governor's association.[212] Activists seemed appreciative of their newfound access. In 1984, the Traprock Report described Kerry as a "strong supporter" and "ardent Freeze advocate".[213]

The campaign against CRP had begun in Massachusetts during the spring of 1981. Activists such as Traprock's Matthew Leighton and Amherst's Ad Hoc Committee on CRP member, Nancy Foster had spent a good part of three years lobbying, organizing and educating the public on the utter futility of civil defense measures in the face of a full nuclear war.[214] Within a year of taking office, Dukakis moved on CRP and all the other proposals put to Kerry the previous year. First, Dukakis circulated a nuclear weapons freeze petition at the National Governors Association meeting of 1983, procuring majority support, then sent copies of the petition to all members of Congress.[215] Then, on June 28, 1984, Dukakis, as promised, issued an executive order withdrawing the Commonwealth from national CRP. Executive Order No. 242 declared, "[T]he only effective defense against the horrors of nuclear weapons lies in their elimination and in the prevention of nuclear war." It pledged the Commonwealth to a policy of promoting peace education and working to influence national policy.[216]

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[212] Traprock Report, Vol. III, # 10, May, 1983. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[213] *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, # 6, October, 1984.

[214] *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, # 4, July, 1984..

[215] Memo: Maureen Goggin and Susan Jacobson to John DeVillars, Subject: Arms Control, February 23, 1987. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers.

[216] Executive Order No. 242, By his Excellency, Michael S. Dukakis, Governor, June 28, 1984. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 4, Folder 231.

At a ceremony attended by hundreds of activist, Dukakis announced his executive order and spoke to the issue of civil defense, stating, "the notion that we can seriously help reduce the horrors of nuclear war by relocating thousands and thousands of people has always seemed to me a fantasy at best... I don't care how far apart we are with other nations... it seems to me there is one thing that unites all of us in this small world and that is some sense of humanity."[217] Concluding his speech to rousing applause, Dukakis declared:

> Simply and practically speaking, there are no safe havens from nuclear attack...The existing and potential strength of nuclear weapons is such that nuclear war can neither be won, nor survived, it can only be prevented...[Therefore] no funds shall be expended by the Commonwealth for crisis relocation planning for nuclear war. God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.[218]

Sharing the podium with the governor at the executive order signing was Amherst activist Nancy Foster, who spoke to the assembled crowd, summing up the past three years of activism around the issue:

> The people at the grassroots have recognized 'crisis relocation' for what it is – an unworkable and dangerously misleading scheme which treats civilians it purports to protect as expendable pawns in a national strategy for waging nuclear war... Public acknowledgement of our profound and immediate peril, and of the futility of seeking protection through evacuation and shelter, is a tribute to an aroused citizenry, working through the democratic process, and to the responsiveness of their elected leaders, first in the cities and towns, now in the Commonwealth as a whole. Public commitment to our only defense against that peril – prevention of nuclear war – is an even greater tribute, and a signal for hope. The Governor in his Executive Order makes that commitment for Massachusetts.[219]

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[217] Undated newspaper clipping, *circa* June, 1984. Frances Crowe Private Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

[218] Associated Press, June 29, 1984.

[219] Traprock Report, Vol. IV, # 4, July, 1984. Traprock Peace Center Records.

By rejecting CRP, Dukakis joined the governors of California, Maryland and New Mexico in a growing national movement opposing FEMA's civil defense plans as both unworkable, and an unacceptable attempt to promote the idea of "winnable" nuclear war. Less than a year from Dukakis' June 28, 1984 executive order withdrawing Massachusetts from all crisis relocation planning, FEMA's deputy press aid Russell Clanahan confirmed, "Crisis relocation planning has been abandoned, no question about it."[220] For freeze and anti-civil defense activists it was an important victory, marking the end of the dark ages of Reagan's first-term, during which the administration sought to return America to a 1950s civil defense mentality and foster acceptance of Strangelovian ideas of waging, surviving and winning a nuclear war with the Soviet Union.

Freeze activists and their friends in the campaign against CRP were jubilant at Dukakis's 1984 executive order. The Traprock Report informed readers that not only had Dukakis pulled the state out of CRP, but had appointed a "Governor's Peace Commission", stating:

> Governor Dukakis has recently agreed to appoint a commission that would make recommendations on how the Commonwealth can advance the cause of peace. This is one result of the work done by the Ad Hoc Commission on Crisis Relocation Planning which developed from a statewide meeting organized by Traprock in February 1983 and which led to the Governor's rejection of CRP in June of this year.[221]

On April 25, 1985, Dukakis issued another executive order, No. 254, officially forming the "Governor's Advisory Committee on the Impact of the Nuclear Arms Race on Massachusetts". The preamble read in part:

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[220] Morning Union, March 5, 1985.

[221] Traprock, Vol. IV, # 6, October, 1984. Traprock Peace Center Records.

> WHEREAS the Massachusetts members of the United States Congress have repeatedly shown a commitment to halting the ever-escalating nuclear arms race; and
> WHEREAS the Massachusetts legislature by resolution in 1981 and the citizens of Massachusetts by referendum in 1982 have declared their clear desire for a halt to the nuclear arms race,
> I, Michael Dukakis, do hereby establish the Governor's Advisory Committee on the Impact of the Nuclear Arms race on Massachusetts...[222]

Executive Order No. 254 called for fifteen to twenty-five members on the Advisory Committee, who "shall have a demonstrated commitment to arms control".[223] "Talking Points" put together for the announcement by the governor's staff emphasized the role of peace activists in the formation of the committee: "Today's announcement is the culmination of a lot of hard work by people across the state. Concerned citizens throughout the Commonwealth have requested that we establish this Advisory Committee to consider the impact of the nuclear arms race on Massachusetts. Those on the Committee and those here today represent thousands of individuals in Massachusetts..."[224] The Advisory Committee included twenty-two members. It was chaired by Jennifer Leaning of Physicians for Social Responsibility and Eric E. Van Loon, Undersecretary of Economic Affairs. The Advisory Committee included members from academia, business and labor, and featured prominent peace activists such as

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[222] Executive Order No. 254, By his Excellency Michael S. Dukakis, April 25, 1985. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 283.

[223] *Ibid.*

[224] "Talking Points for Announcement of Governor's Advisory Committee on the Impact of the Nuclear Arms Race on Massachusetts", April 25, 1985. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 283.

Nancy Foster, Randy Kehler and veteran disarmament activist Jerome Grossman of the Council for a Livable World.[225]

The Advisory Committee's work was to study the economic impact of the arms race on Massachusetts and find ways to promote peace through education and promoting links with people in the Union. In June of 1986, as the name of Michael Dukakis became increasingly mentioned as a possible 1988 Democratic presidential candidate, the Governor's Advisory Committee on the Impact of the Arms Race on Massachusetts issued its official report. The report proved controversial. Several unidentified members leaked stories to the press that accused the Dukakis administration of trying to block efforts by the economic committee from reaching stronger recommendations and conclusions than the governor would have liked.[226] Ironically, the report showed that the state that seemed most opposed to the arms race benefited from it immensely. The report found that in fiscal year (FY) 1985, Massachusetts defense contractors received $1.5 billion from the nuclear arms race, constituting 1.5% of the Massachusetts' gross state product. Sixty-six percent of this defense work was for the Reagan administration's Trident and MX programs, 99% of which went to just nine contractors, 77% of them in the Route 128/Interstate 495 technological beltway around Boston and 9% in Pittsfield in the western part of the state. The report concluded, nuclear weapons spending created 14,000 jobs in the Commonwealth or .05% of the state's jobs, and created 12,000 other

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[225] First Year Report of the Governor's Advisory Committee on the Impact of the Nuclear Arms Race on Massachusetts, June 20, 1986. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 283.

[226] Maureen Goggin and Susan Jacobson to John DeVillars, Subject: Arms Control, February 23, 1987. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 283.

jobs indirectly.[227] The largest defense contractors in the state included AVCO, Draper Labs, General Electric, GTE and Raytheon.[228] Critics charged that the "Massachusetts Miracle" being trumpeted by Dukakis in anticipation of a presidential run was largely fueled not by the governor's economic policies but by the Reagan arms build up.[229]

Despite the economic benefits that seemed to accrue to the state from the arms race, the study issued four recommendations to help end the arms race:

> 1) The state continue its annual reports on the impact of the arms race on the Commonwealth.
> 2) Use public resources to help individuals and firms make the transition to non-nuclear work.
> 3) Have the Commissioner of Education convene a working group to develop nuclear arms race curriculum materials for possible use by schools.
> 4) Establish a formal "sister state" relationship with a Soviet province.[230]

The report concluded, "One state within our nation cannot end the nuclear arms race. A mobilized citizenry and an active state government can, however, give direction, clarity, and voice to a concern that is widely shared." Although the report's recommendations were not radical, the economic conclusions were far from comforting for a governor so identified with freezing the arms race, but whose state had so many jobs dependent on that very arms race. Co-chair Dr. Jennifer Leaning told the Boston

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[227] Traprock Report, Vol. VI, #4, July/August, 1986. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[228] First Annual Report of the Governor's Advisory Committee on the Impact of the Nuclear Arms Race on Massachusetts, June 20, 1986, pg. 10. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 283.

[229] Kenney and Turner, 213-14.

[230] Traprock Report, Vol. VI, # 6, July/August, 1986. Traprock Peace Center Records.

Globe, "I would not be surprised if the governor accepts our report and says, 'Goodbye folks; you're a little too hot to be around.'"[231]

A week after the Advisory Committee issued its report, Dukakis's staff put together "Talking Points" for the upcoming meeting between the governor and the Committee. The governor was to embrace the report while finessing some of its implications. He would open by stating, "I greatly appreciate all of the hard work of the members of the Committee. It is obvious from the thoughtful and detailed nature of the report that a great deal of time and effort went into its preparation... The report and the recommendations are bold, innovative and very thoughtful."[232] The governor would then assert, "We are spending billions of dollars on nuclear weapons which we don't need... Spending on these strategic weapons provides the economy with a false boost. And no state in the union knows this better than Massachusetts. At the end of the 1960s, there were 25,000 engineers out of work in Massachusetts [due to defense cuts.]" Now, the governor argued, Massachusetts could avoid those consequences of defense cuts since "Our current economic success is the result of a diversified economy."[233]

The governor's "Talking Points" anticipated "Potential Criticism of the Report", most of which it saw coming from the left and not the right. The potential criticisms included: "Report plays down dramatic growth in nuclear arms race spending"; "Economic development recommendation should be stronger"; the report didn't "create State Office of Economic Conversion"; "The report's focus on the nuclear arms race

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[231] Boston Globe, March 24, 1986, 1.

[232] "Talking Points for Meeting with Governor's Advisory Committee on the Impact of the Nuclear Arms Race on Massachusetts", June 26, 1986. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 283.

[233] *Ibid.*

obscures Massachusetts economic reliance on overall military spending"; "Vulnerability to layoffs exists if the late 60s experience is repeated"; and the "Governor should denounce nuclear arms race spending as dangerous, wasteful and immoral and let the business community know it's not welcome in Massachusetts."[234] In response to these anticipated critiques, Dukakis planned to emphasize the Massachusetts economy's diversity, the use of encouragement and incentives to promote economic conversion, a strong peace education curriculum and serious efforts to forge a "sister state" relationship with a Soviet Republic. Dukakis would argue, "We have done a tremendous amount already. This Committee is an example of a first in the nation initiative... Also, the responsibility primarily belongs to Congress and to the President. Our Congressional delegation has taken the lead on this issue and is well aware of the support of the Dukakis Administration in this area."[235]

The Advisory Committee report marked yet another expression of opposition to the nuclear arms race in Massachusetts, and reinforced the state's position as a national leader in seeking a new direction in the cold war. The report forced Bay State residents to confront the degree to which the military-industrial complex had become interwoven in the state's economy. Yet the report was also another example of the politics of symbolism, showing the limits of opposing the nuclear arms race when confronted with the economic realities of jobs and billions in corporate profits. Although freeze activism had been able to avoid hard economic realities, eventually, like the movement against nuclear power, it would have to take on powerful economic interests. Although the state would continue to legitimize freeze activism and even make resources available to the

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[234] *Ibid.*

[235] *Ibid.*

movement, in the end, a new direction in the arms race and cold war would have to come from Washington, D.C.

CHAPTER IV

MASSACHUSETTS ACTIVISTS AND POLITICIANS AND THE NATIONAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS FREEZE MOVEMENT, 1980-1984

A Trans-Atlantic Peace Movement: Ronald Reagan, "Euromissiles", the West European Peace Movement and the U.S. Freeze Movement

The rightward turn in American politics symbolized by the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 was foreshadowed across the Atlantic by the election of Margaret Thacher and the Conservative Party in Britain's 1979 national elections. Like Reagan, Thacher called for cuts in social spending, less regulation of business, reduced taxation, an arms buildup and a harder line toward the Soviet Union. Even Social Democrats such as West German chancellor Helmut Schmidt, a staunch advocate of *détente,* called for building up NATO's nuclear weaponry. Meeting in Brussels in December of 1979, the leaders of NATO nations adopted a decision to deploy U.S. medium range missiles in Britain, Holland, Belgium, Italy and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) by the fall of 1983. The decision was based on a desire by NATO nations to counter the 700 medium range SS-20s the Soviet Union had aimed at western Europe. On top of the independent nuclear capability already possed by Britain and France, the United States was to install 464 Cruise and 108 Pershing II intermediate range missiles in NATO nations, with all the Pershing and 96 Cruise missiles earmarked for the FRG alone. The goal was first to link the U.S. closer to its western European allies who feared the parity in strategic long-range missiles sought by SALT II would leave them vulnerable to the Soviet Union's superior conventional forces. Second, European leaders of NATO nations hoped to pursue what they called a "double track" policy of building up NATO's

intermediate nuclear weaponry while pursuing parallel negotiations aimed at reducing the number of comparable Soviet SS-20s.[1]

The decision under Jimmy Carter to install U.S. "Euromissiles" in NATO nations came against the backdrop of the deterioration which reached a new low only weeks after the Brussels conference when the U.S.S.R. invaded Afghanistan. By 1980, the stirrings of a new European peace movement could be felt across Western Europe, and especially the FRG, as concern grew over the emergence of what some called "Cold War II". As in the United States, the nascent European peace movement grew exponentially with the election of Ronald Reagan who had campaigned against *détente* and arms control.[2] If Reagan's loose talk of "winnable nuclear war" disturbed many Americans, it positively rattled many Europeans, who saw in the U.S. president's rhetoric of nuclear war confirmation of their image of the former actor as a Hollywood cowboy who now had his finger on the nuclear trigger. Unlike earlier presidents, who regardless of policy at least sought to assuage the fear of nuclear war, Reagan seemed to go out of his way to exacerbate such fears with speeches such as the one he gave at West Point, proclaiming, "Man has used every weapon he has ever devised… it takes no crystal ball to perceive that a nuclear war is likely, sooner or later."[3]

As seen, the freeze movement in the United States began before the election of Ronald Reagan, galvanized into action by the breakdown of *détente* and the adoption of

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[1] Steve Breyman, Why Movements Matter: The West German Peace Movement and U.S. Arms Control Policy (Albany, New York: Sate University of New York Press, 2001) 1-9.

[2] Frances Fitzgerald, Way Out There in the Blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the End of the Cold War (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2000) 72-113; David S. Meyer, A Winter of Discontent: The Nuclear Freeze and American Politics (New York, NY: Praeger Publishers, 1990) 49-60.

[3] Breyman, 53.

more hard-line anti-Soviet policies in the late Carter years. Likewise, the European peace movement had already begun mobilizing by late 1979. For political scientist Steve Breyman, who has written on the West German peace movement in the early 1980s and its impact on West German and U.S. cold war policy, it was the NATO decision of December 1979 that constituted the "spark that ignited the dry kindling of [European] peace movement potential."[4] Thus, as Reagan assumed office, there were already the stirrings of a growing trans-Atlantic antinuclear weapons movement. The enormous Reagan arms build up, however, in concert with the administration's openly belligerent rhetoric toward the Soviet Union, was the final ingredient which set the stage for the dramatic growth of the freeze movement in the United States and the peace movement in Western Europe. Now, NATO plans to base U.S. Pershing II and Cruise missiles in Western Europe seemed less a part of a "double-track" policy aimed at negotiations than preparation for waging limited nuclear war. Rather than binding the U.S. to the fate of Europe, many Europeans now believed the Euromissiles, in effect, de-coupled the U.S. from Western Europe, allowing it the option of fighting a nuclear war limited to the European theater.[5]

From 1981 through the final showdown in the fall of 1983 when the U.S. Cruise and Pershing II missiles were installed, Western Europe witnessed the largest peace movement in its postwar history. Antinuclear weapons protests of tens of thousands and then hundreds of thousands swept across the borders of Western European nations, enveloping large portions of the European middleclass. Polls showed that by 1982, up to

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[4] *Ibid., 9.*

[5] *Ibid., 53.*

69% of West Germans polled opposed the introduction of the Pershing II and Cruise missiles on West German soil, with 58% of English respondents taking a similar position on basing U.S. Cruise missiles in Britain.[6] Increasingly, Western Europeans saw the United States under Ronald Reagan, rather than the Soviet Union, as the major source of instability and potential war in Europe. As opposition to the Euromissiles began to translate into diminishing support for NATO, members of the Reagan administration worried about the spirit of "neutralism" they saw spreading across Western Europe.[7]

The U.S. freeze and European peace movements blossomed at almost exactly the same time, ran parallel through most of their respective histories and shared a number of similarities. In both, older activists were the driving organizing force, with women such as West German Green Party activist Petra Kelly playing highly visible, leading roles. Both movements witnessed the mobilization of numerous religious figures, especially Protestant clergy, as movement leaders. The U.S. freeze and European antinuclear weapons movements both sought to achieve as broad a base of support as possible, which led to tensions in each over time. Yet, for two mass movements employing similar tactics and consisting of similar bases of support, the two movements often remained remarkably separate. Beginning in the fall of 1981, the huge European peace marches became headline stories in the U.S. press. Although West European activists stressed their protests were directed at the U.S. government and not the American people, frequently the protests took on an anti-American tone, which became fodder for U.S. news outlets. Early on, U.S. freeze leaders decided to keep the American freeze

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[6] *Ibid.*, 120 and 125.

[7] *Ibid.*, 100.

movement separate from the European peace movement. To win a mass base of support, which was its goal, freeze leaders decided to pursue the creation of a wholly "American" movement, free of associations with the frequently more militant and sometimes anti-American peace movement overseas.[8] Despite this national strategy, many of the more radical activists in the American movement sought to promote a global vision and strategy independent of the freeze movement. Numerous American activists crossed the Atlantic to participate in Western Europe's mass peace marches, while others carried out civil disobedience at home to protest the deployment of the U.S. Cruise and Pershing II missiles.[9]

Despite the decision to uncouple the emerging U.S. freeze movement from the European peace movement, the two movements were born, grew, peaked and declined at almost exactly identical times. Thus, the freeze movement which swept the United States from 1980 through 1983, had as its constant backdrop, the impending showdown in Europe over the basing of U.S. Cruise and Pershing II missiles, making both movements part of a trans-Atlantic peace movement. Combined, the two movements represented the greatest political challenge faced by Ronald Reagan during his first term.

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[8] Meyer, 229-30.

[9] On the role of Massachusetts activists in direct action protests against the Euromissiles in the United States, see the Greenfield Recorder, September 6, 1983; Traprock Report Vol. III, #8, March, 1983, Traprock Peace Center Records. The U.S. media did not begin substantive coverage of the European movement until very late in 1981. The Traprock Report announced that each issue would keep readers apprised of developments within the European peace movement, stating, "... because of the news blackout on disarmament activities in Europe, we will in each newsletter, share some highlights on the large and growing disarmament movement in Europe.", Traprock Report, Vol. II, #4, September, 1981.

Randy Kehler and the National Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign

On March 20-22, 1981, over 300 antinuclear weapons activists met at Georgetown University's Center for Peace Studies in Washington, D.C. for a "National Strategy Conference for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze". Activists representing groups such as Mobilization for Survival (MfS), the Council for a Livable World (CLW), the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and other mostly radical pacifist peace groups met in the nation's capital to map out a long term strategy for a national nuclear weapons freeze movement. Among the 300 plus activists representing thirty-one states at the conference were Randall Forsberg, Randy Kehler and the conference's keynote speaker, Frances Crowe from the western Massachusetts AFSC.[10] Kehler and Crowe had met with many of those attending the conference at the U.N. Plaza Building the previous October, on the eve of the freeze referendum vote in western Massachusetts. It was from this meeting that Kehler had reported to his Traprock colleagues that national activists were looking to the western Massachusetts referendum campaign as "the bellwether of the whole moratorium movement".[11]

At the national freeze movement's founding conference in Washington, D.C., Kehler and Crowe found themselves treated like minor celebrities, being repeatedly asked about the western Massachusetts freeze campaign the previous fall and how the lessons there could be applied nationally. The conference adopted a national strategy to be carried out over a three-year period. The group decided to embrace the localist strategy advocated most ardently by Kehler, and to work through existing peace groups

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[10] Traprock Report, Vol. II, #2, April 1981; Traprock Fundraising Letter, October 15, 1980. Traprock Peace Center Records. Meyer, 176-7.

[11] Traprock Fundraising Letter, October 15, 1980. Traprock Peace Center Records.

around the country, thus making the national organization a coordinating body and information clearinghouse until such time as the movement was prepared for the national organization to direct more of it focus on Washington, D.C. The conference adopted a strategy of trying to reach the broadest possible base of support by emphasizing the freeze exclusive of other issues, seeking a "least common denominator" policy that would be the source of future tension within the movement, but which initially allowed the movement to grow rapidly.[12] The national strategy adopted at the Georgetown conference consisted of four phases:

> Phase One: Demonstrate the positive potential of the freeze proposal for stopping the arms race.
> Phase Two: Build broad and visible public support for the freeze.
> Phase Three: Focus public support on policy-makers so that it becomes a matter of national debate.
> Phase Four; Win the debate so that the freeze is adopted as a national policy objective.[13]

The first phase would be dominated by small, grassroots efforts like the one in western Massachusetts, each designed to show the viability of the freeze proposal on a small scale and to begin building the local bases around the country on which the national movement would depend. The early phase was to be as decentralized as possible, giving local activists broad leeway to build the movement to fit local conditions. Building on these small victories, the second phase would seek much greater national visibility, shifting focus, once momentum had been built, onto policy makers in Washington, D.C. Lastly, the movement hoped to translate the freeze proposal into reality by having it adopted as U.S. policy. The conference predicated this strategy on

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[12] Meyer, 176-7.

[13] Memo: "To: Active Participants in the Nuclear Weapon Freeze Campaign", From: Randy Kehler and Gordon Faisson, July 1981. Traprock Peace Center Records.

past experience with disarmament efforts. The conference adopted a "Strategy for Stopping the Nuelear Arms Race", which stated, "Past efforts at serious arms control, such as the 1972 Demoeratie platform for eutting the military budget, the transfer amendment resolutions of the mid-1970s and the SALT II ratifieation process failed in part because they were not preeeded by active educational efforts among the general publie by a sufficiently broad speetrum of organizations."[14]

To carry out this national strategy, the conference created the Nuelear Weapons Freeze Campaign (NWFC). The new organization would hold two national conferences a year, during whieh the conferees from around the country would choose a part time National Committee, whieh in turn would ehoose a full time Exeeutive Committee and a Nuclear Weapons Freeze Clearinghouse to disseminate freeze and disarmament information. The National Committee would also elect task forees to deal with issues such as religion, minorities, labor, media, direet aetion and fundraising. The aim was to make the NWFC a loose coordinating body to map out overall strategy, while keeping as much organizing as possible at the grass roots.[15] The new organization also resolved to begin publication of The Freeze Newsletter, with the aim of keeping all of its members aware of the various freeze aetivities taking plaee across the nation.[16]

Initially, the NWFC was based in Brookline, Massachusetts at the headquarters of Randall Forsberg's Institute for Disarmament and Defense Studies (IDDS). This

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[14] 'Strategy for Stopping the Nuclear Arms Race", Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, March 1981. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts (hereinafter cited as Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection).

[15] Memo: To National Committee, From: Executive Committee, Subject: "Insuring Strong Task Forces", December 11, 1981. Frances Crowe Papers. Sophia Smith Collection.

[16] Meyer, 176-7.

decision, however, situated the movement in the heart of New England, already viewed as far ahead of the rest of the country on the issue, and risked associating the movement with many of the greater Boston area peace groups. The movement soon decided to move its headquarters to St. Louis, Missouri, roughly the geographical center of the United States. Choosing St. Louis, it was hoped, would emphasize the middle-American image the movement hoped to project.[17] Participants in the national freeze movement elected Randy Kehler as one of it first two national "coordinators". Kehler was an ideal choice in many ways. His commitment was beyond question, he had the experience of having helped lead the first successful local pro-freeze campaign, his physical appearance and dress were conventional, and his soft-spoken style would be an asset. Kehler, looking back, stated, "My job was to hold the movement together, to resolve tension, to find a middle road that could hold this movement together."[18]

Randy Kehler's grand design called for an emphasis on grassroots organizing and seeking the broadest possible support across the political spectrum. At a second national conference in late 1981, Kehler summarized the movement's strategy:

> Our challenge in the upcoming months will be to reach out to that wide spectrum of Americans never involved in this type of movement. While we broaden our base to include labor, business, minority groups, Middle America, we also must use creative means to sustain the many local efforts which are already well underway... We must sustain our energy while we keep our eyes on our goal: the implementation of the Freeze.[19]

This focus would frequently put Kehler in the position of advocating moderate positions, which often belied his radical past and ongoing war tax resistance. Kehler

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[17] *Ibid,* 181.

[18] *Ibid.*, 181.

[19] "Call for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze", National Committee Summary of the National Conference in St. Louis, December 11-13, 1981. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

worked hard to bridge the freeze movement's limited immediate goal with its more radical long-term ambitions. In one memo, Kehler wrote:

> As we are all aware, one of the principal criticisms of the freeze is that it does not go far enough. As Seymour Melman, an avowed freeze supporter, said in a talk at Hampshire College this past weekend, "What worries me about the freeze is that we may focus so much on getting a freeze that once we've got it we won't know where to go from there." (Not a direct quote). This is perhaps a ticklish area, for we don't want to scare people away by seeming to ask for too much too soon. Yet, I agree with Melman. A very simple approach, I think, is to couple the freeze proposal with a preamble "Step One' every chance we get...It's not that the campaign has failed to mention the business of Step One, followed by a Step Two consisting of negotiated reductions on both sides, it's just that we need to make more of it.[20]

Beyond those who felt the national freeze movement did not go far enough, were those who felt it did not go fast enough. As national coordinator of the NWFC, Kehler quickly found that many in the national movement seemed too eager to take the movement to Washington before its local base had been sufficiently built. Kehler confided to some in the movement, "I think there is a tendency among freeze organizers to look ahead to the Congressional elections of November 1982 with some feeling of panic, a feeling that somehow we must totally reshape our national strategy in order to focus exclusively on these elections. In my view, the primary work ahead of us in '82 is base-building work... not the Congressional elections."[21] In response, Kehler sent out a memo to members of the freeze movement urging patience and arguing strenuously for keeping the movement focused on building local grassroots organizations. Sent out over the signatures of Kehler and his colleague at the national headquarters, Gordon Faisson,

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[20] Memo: "Comments on the Strategy-Related Papers Distributed at October 30, 1981 East Coast Meeting", From: Randy Kehler, November 9, 1981. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[21] *Ibid.*

the memo was an impassioned and detailed defense of the local strategy that had proved so successful in western Massachusetts. "Our concern", the memo stated, "is that we take this strategy seriously and, specifically, *that we avoid the temptation to go directly to elected officials, at the state or federal levels, without doing our homework* [emphasis in the original] -- that is, the work of organizing freeze support at home, in our local communities and local organizations."[22] Referring to the recent adoption of a freeze resolution in the Massachusetts legislature in the spring of 1981, which some national activists wanted to try to replicate immediately in their home states, Kehler warned, "It was our feeling in the Massachusetts campaign... that we probably would *not* have been successful [with the legislature] had we not been able to confront state legislators with the fruits of our previous local organizing: the victory of the freeze referendum in western Massachusetts in November, 1980 (the culmination of a nine month campaign) and the resulting endorsements of many conservative as well as liberal newspapers and politicians in western Massachusetts (including the somewhat reluctant endorsement of western Massachusetts Congressman, Silvio Conte, considered a moderate Republican.)"[23]

Kehler and Faisson's memo proceeded to make a number of astute observations, which deserve some considered attention. They first noted that a local strategy was a powerful recruitment tool. "The distance between people and faraway capitals and bureaucrats tends to maintain the distancing and numbing that bedevils our psychic and

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[22] Memo: "To: Active Participants in the Nuclear Weapon freeze Campaign." From: Randy Kehler and Gordon Faisson. July 22, 1981. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[23] *Ibid.*

political processes."[24] People who might feel intimidated or alienated by national or state-wide campaigns, the memo argued, would be more inclined to "get their feet wet as organizers if the campaign is local…" Overtime, a percentage of such local activists would choose to get involved at a higher geographical level. Further, the scope of a nuclear war was difficult to fathom. A local campaign could personalize the dangers faced by humanity, making them less abstract and thus more persuasive to potential supporters. In a subsection entitled "Bringing the Arms Race Home", the memo stated, "Rather than try to convince our neighbors that Massachusetts or the country as a whole could never defend itself once a nuclear war had begun, we explain that Greenfield… would probably be engulfed in a firestorm if a one megaton bomb fell on nearby Westover Air Force Base…"[25] Both of these strategies, recruitment through local organizing and emphasizing the local impact of the arms race became one of the movement's strengths as it spread across the United States.

The memo continued to point out the logistical strengths of a grassroots movement. First, local organizers would be able to choose "appropriate tactics", suited to local conditions. Since local activists would not be "anonymous", their influence with their neighbors, local newspaper editors and local elected officials would be seen as having "the most integrity". Lastly, local campaigns would allow the freeze movement to fly under the radar of well-financed national opposition groups who were unlikely to take notice of local campaigns, and appear to be outside intruders should they attempt to intervene in a local campaign. "We are much less likely to run into well-financed

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[24] *Ibid.*

[25] *Ibid.*

opposition from corporate interests (e.g. defense industries and their lobbying associations) when the campaign is local. The forces most apt to oppose us are usually large and centralized. For this reason, they rarely have much influence in a particular local community."[26]

This was an important lesson, no doubt partly learned from the experience of the statewide campaigns to ban or limit nuclear energy in the 1970s. In all cases, statewide movements for antinuclear energy referenda had run into stiff opposition from national utilities whose pro-nuclear campaigns outspent antinuclear power campaigns by as much as ten times.[27] In the 1970s, the nuclear energy industry sought to offset their "outsider" image by enlisting local labor unions to be the public face of their pro-nuclear campaigns. The 1980 freeze campaign, although winning only limited union support, never directly threatened defense jobs, and thus avoided mobilizing the only potentially viable opposition in western Massachusetts. As seen in the previous chapter, when defense jobs were directly challenged by the freeze movement in the Northampton and Cambridge NFZ campaigns, the Bay State freeze movement ran into its first set-backs.[28]

The Kehler-Faisson memo seems to have staunched the rumblings in the national freeze movement for going to the top too soon. The years 1981 and 1982 saw local movements, all with their own color and flair, sprouting up across America. The movement took hold most quickly in New England, spreading throughout the Northeast,

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[26] *Ibid.*

[27] Thomas Raymond Wellock, Critical Masses: Opposition to Nuclear Power in California, 1958-1978 (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998). Christian Joppke, Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy: A Comparison of Germany and the United Sates (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1993) 65-69.

[28] Boston Globe, April 16, 1983; Daily Hampshire Gazette, June 6, 1984; Sentinel, May 23, 1984.

especially in New York and New Jersey. In New York City, over 3,400 Manhattan residents attended small "town meetings" to endorse the freeze on May 25, 1982. "This is Jeffersonian democracy in action", declared one participant.[29] In New Jersey, liberal Democratic governor Brendan Byrne proclaimed October 24-31, 1981 "Mutual Nuclear Freeze Week" in the Garden State.[30] Movements sprang up in the Midwest, through the plains states and swept across the entire west coast, taking firm root in all-important California, where freeze activists, beginning in December of 1981, began procuring over 500,000 signatures to put the freeze on the ballot in 1982. Not surprisingly, the South and Southwest were the most difficult geographical areas in the country for the freeze to breach.[31]

Piggybacking the national media coverage of the European peace movement that began in late 1981, the national freeze movement became the focus of growing press and media coverage in the United States. David S. Meyer, in his important study of the national freeze movement, A Winter of Discontent, graphs the growing coverage of the freeze by the press and media, showing coverage of the movement to have exploded in 1982, peaked throughout 1983, and declined rapidly in 1984.[32] Meyer found Helen Caldicott and "Ground Zero's" Roger Molander to be the most commonly quoted

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[29] Harry C. Boyte, "The Formation of the New Peace Movement: A Communitarian Perspective," Social Policy, Summer 1982.

[30] Meyer, 179.

[31] Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway, "The Freeze Movement Versus Ronald Reagan", The New Left Journal 137 (January/February, 1983) 11.

[32] *Ibid.*, 123 and 125.

activists, with only Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy and Congressman Ed Markey, relative late-comers to the freeze, quoted more often.[33]

The freeze movement also spread its message through events organized by other arms control groups. Roger Molander, a former National Security Council analyst, founded Ground Zero in 1979 with his twin brother Earl, to close the gap between policy makers and the public. Ground Zero sought primarily to do this through an information campaign under the slogan: "Nuclear War: What's In It For You". Like so many others, Molander was galvanized into action by the failure of SALT II. "The silence was deafening", Molander told Newsweek, "It was quite clear that you couldn't conduct policy on this issue with a gulf between the people... and the leaders."[34] Among the ways Ground Zero sought to promote arms control was through its "Sister City" campaign, in which cities and towns declared a "sister" relationship with a town or city in the U.S.S.R. with the goal of underscoring the interconnectedness between those at "ground zero" in the Soviet Union and the United States. From April 18-25, 1982, Molander organized "Ground Zero Week," a nationwide information campaign modeled on the Vietnam teach-ins that swept America in 1965. An estimated one million Americans participated in the many speeches, film screenings, seminars and debates held around the country at cities, colleges and high schools.[35] Although Moldander never endorsed the freeze proposal, Ground Zero Week turned into a major forum for freeze advocates to spread their message. A former member of the U.S. Arms Control and

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[33] *Ibid.*, 128-9.

[34] Newsweek, April 26, 1982.

[35] Meyer, 99;

Disarmament Agency, Molander hoped Ground Zero week would pressure the Reagan administration into returning to arms control talks. "What we seek is a public active enough in the dialogue about nuclear war that they feel compelled to work with the Government in coming up with solutions, whether it be disarmament, a freeze, or some other option," Molander declared.[36]

By the spring of 1982, the freeze movement began to "percolate up" as Randall Forsberg had hoped. A number of Hollywood actors and other celebrities publicly campaigned for the freeze, including Martin Sheen, Susan Sarandon, Tony Randall, Stevie Wonder, Yo-Yo Ma, Leonard Bernstein, Meryl Streep, as well as several celebrity-activist luminaries such as Joan Baez, Pete Seeger, Jackson Browne, Paul Newman and Harry Belafonte. Scientist Carl Sagan of the popular PBS documentary, Cosmos, became one of the movement's most active boosters in scores of television appearances.[37] The freeze campaign also won endorsements from a number of former national security policy makers, among whom were George Kennan, Averill Harriman, George Ball, Warren Christopher, Clark Clifford, Hodding Carter, Henry Cabot Lodge and former CIA Director William Colby. Former military officials who publicly endorsed the freeze included Admirals Gene Laroque, Gene Carroll, Noel Gayler, Major General William Fairbourn and Admiral Hyman Rickover, whom some called "the father of the nuclear navy", but who now made it a personal crusade to campaign for absolute disarmament. Wrote Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway in New Left

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[36] Douglass C. Waller, Congress and the Nuclear Freeze: An Inside Look at the Politics of a Mass Movement (Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987) 39.

[37] Meyer, 102; Waller, 67.

Review, "It is remarkable how many out-of-power cold warriors have suddenly seen light on the road to Damascus."[38]

The most potent endorsements of the freeze, however, came from the pulpit. Churches and synagogues across America became bases of freeze organizing, and many ministers, priests and rabbis discussed the freeze with their congregations.[39] The most influential endorsement came in the form of two pastoral letters issued by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in 1981 and 1982, entitled, "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response", in which the bishops not only endorsed a nuclear weapons freeze but called for deep cuts in nuclear armaments leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons. (The Reagan administration was particularly concerned about the bishop's pastoral letter, and after protesting the first letter in early 1982, found the bishops issuing an even more adamant letter later in the year.")[40] The National Council of Churches, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the United Presbyterian Church and the American Baptist Churches joined the Bishops.[41]

The freeze movement also won the endorsement, and more importantly the financial support, of a number of wealthy businesspeople and well-financed foundations. In California, Los Angeles millionaire Harold Willens helped finance a large share of that state's 1982 freeze referendum campaign. Foundations financing disarmament and freeze activity included the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the Stern Fund and the MacArthur

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[38] Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway, "The Freeze Movement Versus Reagan", 9; Meyer, 100.

[39] Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway, "The Freeze Movement Versus Reagan", 17-18.

[40] *Ibid.*

[41] Waller, 38-9.

Foundation.[42] While money streamed into the movement from well-healed sources, the movement continued local grassroots fundraising with traditional bake sales and car washes, as well as from fundraising events and concerts. In one benefit, the Boston Symphony Orchestra raised over $90,000 for the freeze movement.[43]

The movement also held numerous legal rallies and marches to promote the freeze across the United States. One of the more colorful occurred in the summer of 1981, when approximately 350 freeze supporters marched from Washington, Vermont thirty-five miles to Moscow, Vermont. The three-day march corresponded with the anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and included a 3,000-person freeze support-rally at the statehouse. The rally, like many freeze events, had the aura of a county fair, as young and old alike were on hand and plenty of Frisbees, hotdogs and ice cream were in evidence. Among the speakers at the rally were John Kenneth Galbraith, Vermont's Moderate Republican Congressman James Jeffords, Lt. Governor Madeleine Kunin and Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy.[44] One speaker not allowed to attend was Yuri Kaprolov, counselor from the Soviet Embassy, who had been invited, but prevented from attending by the Reagan administration, which had recently imposed restrictions on the movement of Soviet personnel in the United States in retaliation for similar actions carried out by the Soviet Union.[45] The diplomatic imbroglio made the event national news. Upon reaching Moscow, Vermont, Robin Loyd of the Burlington Peace Coalition proclaimed, "It was thrilling when we arrived in

[42] Cockburn and Ridgeway, "The Freeze Movement Versus Ronald Reagan", 10; Meyer, 110-1

[43] Greenfield Recorder, May 25, 1982.

[44] Daily Hampshire Gazette, August 8, 1981

[45] Valley Advocate, August 19, 1981.

Moscow. It was a spontaneous outpouring of feeling. Everyone was saying, 'It's not so far from Washington to Moscow.'"[46]

The proliferation of grassroots freeze campaigns and the heightened national visibility of the movement began to be reflected in public opinion polls by the spring of 1982. An Associated Press/NBC poll showed 83% of Americans supporting the freeze proposal; a Washington Post poll showed 79% support; a CBS/New York Times poll had 77% of Americans backing the freeze; and a Gallup poll pegged pro-freeze support at 71%.[47] The freeze movement's inroads on the public opinion front were likewise being reflected on the political front. In December, 1981, after a little more than a year of freeze activism, twenty-four members of the House of Representatives and only one Senator – Rhode Island Democrat, Clairborne Pell – had announced their support for the freeze. By the spring of 1982, those numbers were up to 169 announced supporters in the House of Representatives and twenty-five in the Senate.[48] Noting the shift in public attitudes over the course of two years, Douglass C. Waller, congressional aide to Massachusetts Congressman Ed Markey, wrote, "Just as 1980 was not a good year for a politician to admit he favored arms control, 1982 was not a good year for him to say he opposed it."[49]

The rapid growth of national politcal support was most remarkable in Massachusetts. In July 1981, the Massachusetts Coalition for a Nuclear Freeze noted in

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[46] *Ibid.*

[47] Boston Globe, May 17, 1982; Meyer, 88. Similar polls showed 38% of Americans distrusted Ronald Reagan, when it came to nuclear weapons policy. Meyer, 87.

[48] Meyer, 183.

[49] Waller, 76.

Freezeletter, "We are far behind in the United States. Only twelve congressional representatives have endorsed the freeze… Why none from Massachusetts? [Actually, Silvio Conte had endorse it in 1980.] One reason is the rightward shift in Congress. But here in Massachusetts, with our record of independence and leadership in national and foreign affairs, the main reason is lack of public interest."[50]By the November 1982 vote on the freeze referendum in Masssachusetts, the Coalition for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze boasted on one of its fliers, "The entire Massachusetts delegation in Congress, Republican and Democrat alike, urges a yes vote on question 5".[51]

The changes in Massachusetts politicians positions were sometimes dramatic. In 1981, Massachusetts Senator Paul Tsongas described the freeze proposal as "on the fringe" and added, "It is not a sophisticated answer to a complex problem."[52] By March 1982, Tsongas embraced the freeze and welcomed Bay State freeze activists to the capital with open arms when they presented both Tsongas and Silvio Conte with eight by twelve foot postcards filled with signatures for the freeze. The minutes of the western Massachusetts Steering Committee for the Coalition for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze, described the moment: "Tsongas loved the card and has put it in his office. Abby [Seixas] came away with the impression that he is involved and sincere, and that she is glad there are politicians of his character. It is interesting to note that he had serious

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[50] Freezeletter, July 1981. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[51] "Vote Yes on 5!", Flier, Council for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[52] Freezeletter, July 1981. Frances Crowe Papers. Sophia Smith Collection.

hesitations about the freeze in its ability to get through Congress, and now just a short month later he is sponsoring the resolution in Congress."[53]

Like Tsongas, moderate Republican Silvio Conte sponsored the freeze resolution making its way through the House of Representatives in 1982. Conte, once considered a lukewarm supporter, was now leading the push for the freeze due to the incessant lobbying of his western Massachusetts constituents. The minutes for another western Massachusetts Steering Committee reveal how activists lobbied their congressman: "... Jeff Ciuffreda, who is the main person in Conte's western Massachusetts office... is very supportive of the freeze and will make sure that Conte sees news stories about the freeze when he comes to the area. Our responsibility is to get the articles to him..."[54] On key votes, organizations like Traprock mobilized freeze supporters to lobby their elected official. One such case occurred with the September 1982 vote on the MX and Pershing II missiles, when a Traprock letter urged members to focus on Silvio Conte and Democrat Edward Boland: "They are considered swing votes who could go either way and may be influenced by constituent pressure. Please urge everyone you know to write or call Conte or Boland immediately to thank them for their recent support for the freeze (the Zablocki amendment) and to urge them to vote against funding for the MX and Pershing II." (Boland was the only member of the Massachusetts delegation to vote for the Pershing II. All opposed the MX.) Even politicians who strongly supported the freeze could not escape the ceaseless lobbying. Western Massachusetts organizers

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[53] "Western Massachusetts Steering Committee Minutes ", Coalition for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze, March 17, 1982.

[54] "Western Massachusetts Steering Committee Minutes", Coalition for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze, February 24, 1982. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

exhorted freeze supporters to "Birddog Conte, Boland, Kennedy and Tsongas for the purpose of strengthening their commitment to the freeze and disarmament."[55] The national movement likewise encouraged local groups to continue to lobby supporters. A NWFC memo to local organizers urged: "Even if your Congressional Representative supports the Freeze Resolution and is a cosponsor, it is still important that he/she receive letters, proxies, and phone calls. This will provide supportive legislators with ammunition for their own lobbying efforts."[56]

In some cases, it was politicians who sought out the freeze movement. According to Randy Kehler, the staff of Senator Edward Kennedy "very aggressively pursued us". Kehler said, "Kennedy's people came to us. They saw us as a bandwagon they wanted to get their man behind, or in front of, I should say."[57] Kennedy's people attended the 1982 freeze conference in Colorado, and quickly developed close relations with the movement, coordinating the push for a freeze resolution in Congress with the national freeze movement. "Ted Kennedy wanted to follow in Jack's footsteps," Kehler recalled.[58] Kennedy hoped to pass a freeze resolution to coincide with the twentieth anniversary of John Kennedy's signing of the Limited Test Ban Treaty. According to

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[55] "Strategy Ideas for November 1982: Steering Committee Minutes". Western Massachusetts Coalition for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze, November 1982. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection. In 1983, Massachusetts freeze proponents worked closely with several Bay State legislators to delay a vote on the MX. A Massachusetts Coalition for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze memo noted: "This was accomplished by the Massachusetts delegation – Speaker O'Neill, Representatives Markey and Mavroules – to give us more time to marshal our forces. It had a great deal to do with the effects of Coalition members." Memo: To Coalition Members, From: Joanne Duhle, Massachusetts Coalition for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze, June 17, 1983. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[56] Memo: To: Local Organizers, From: Ben Senturia, Re: Freeze Lobbying Preparation, Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, *circa* 1983. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[57] Telephone Interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

[58] *Ibid.*

Kehler, Kennedy "sincerely believed in the value of the freeze" and had first turned to Mark Hatfield. But Kehler felt Kennedy's solicitousness might have hurt the movement, stating, "[It was] very heady for us to be courted that way by such a national figure, at the same time it caused us to leap ahead of ourselves before we were ready."[59]

Thus, in a few short years, the movement for a nuclear weapons freeze exploded across the United States. In western Massachusetts, The Greenfield Recorder proudly headlined a May 1982 article on the growing national freeze movement, "Seed Planted in WMass Spreads Across Nation."[60] To the New York Times, Randy Kehler declared, "I feel like I'm on a comet, but I don't know whether I'm leading it or on its tail."[61] As Kehler spoke, the national freeze movement was on the cusp of its most spectacular event, the June 12, 1982 rally for a nuclear weapons freeze in New York's Central Park.

Breakthrough: The Central Park Nuclear Weapons Freeze Rally, June 12, 1982

Following New England, the freeze movement took hold most rapidly in New York, whose State Assembly adopted a freeze resolution in 1981 close on the heals of the Massachusetts legislature's freeze resolution. New York City had become a particular hotbed of freeze activity. New York City was likewise home to the headquarters of numerous peace organizations, which made the city one of the nation's organizational hubs of freeze activity. In the fall of 1981, local organizers began planning for a huge pro-freeze rally in Manhattan's expansive and idyllic Central Park.

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[59] *Ibid.*

[60] Greenfield Recorder, May 25, 1982.

[61] New York Times, March 15, 1982; Meyer, 128.

The freeze rally was scheduled for mid-June to coincide with the United Nation's Second Special Session on Disarmament. It seemed that almost every political group to the left of center wanted a piece of the fast-growing freeze movement. Over 80 national groups and 150 local New York City groups coalesced into a planning coalition. Not surprisingly, the coalition underwent major rifts and divisions. The divisions tended to run between radical groups who wished to connect the arms race with issues such as U.S. policy in Central America and support for apartheid in South Africa, and those who worked hard to keep the freeze movement's commitment to a tight focus on the freeze to win broad-based support. Radicals believed the rally was being diluted to the point where its message was being lost, while advocates for a more focused message, believed if the rally went too far left it would alienate the many "mainstream" Americans they hoped to attract. Racial divisions compounded these divisions, with militant African-American organizations such as Harlem Fight Back and the Brooklyn-based Black United Front demanding more explicit connections between the arms race, racism and poverty be made at the rally. Many of the white, middle-class freeze activists were unaccustomed to working with minority groups and misunderstandings and tensions grew. Some organizations such as Greenpeace, furious at what they believed was an obstructionist attitude by the Black United Front and its allies, walked out. More experienced organizations, including the War Resisters League and the AFSC, played crucial roles in holding most of the planning coalition together.[62]

The divisions were hardly visible on June 12 as hundreds of thousands of people flooded the streets of New York City converging on Central Park under sunny blue

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[62] Meyer, 184-6; New York Times, June 4, 1982; "War in Peace", WIN, August 15, 1982, pp. 6-7.

skies. Most estimates place the number attending the rally at around 750,000 people, although some argue the numbers exceeded one million.[63] The mood was peaceful and festive, imbued with the wholesomeness that had become something of a trademark at many freeze events. Relations were warm between the crowd and the police, many of whom expressed sympathy with the cause. Amidst balloons, tables, exhibitions and roaming street vendors milled a crowd of all ages. "It was an intense experience to see the range of people there – from people in wheelchairs to babes at the breast," declared Hampshire College Ecology Professor Arthur Westing upon his return to western Massachusetts.[64] Westing was one of an estimated 10,000 Massachusetts residents who converged on New York City for the rally.[65] Boston and Cambridge, satirizing FEMA's crisis relocation planning, declared June 12th "Preventive Evacuation Day" and urged city residents to head for New York City.[66] Days before the June 12 rally, state representative Thomas M. Gallagher (D-Boston) urged Bostonians to go, declaring, "Last fall millions of Europeans came out and demonstrated against the nuclear arms race as totally insane and a danger to the entire planet… it is time for Americans to stand up and be counted this Saturday."[67]

The Central Park rally witnessed a seemingly endless procession of speakers cross the podium to address the crowd. Among them were Massachusetts Congressman Ed Markey, Bella Abzug, Coretta Scott King, Bruce Springsteen, Orson Welles, Pete

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[63] Meyer, 187.

[64] Amherst Bulletin, June 23, 1982.

[65] Morning Union, May 27, 1982.

[66] Greenfield Recorder, June 11, 1982.

[67] Morning Union, May 27, 1982.

Seeger, Linda Rondstadt, Seymour Melman, David Dellinger and Randall Forsberg. Forsberg underscored the social cost of the arms race, asking the crowd, "How can we spend $20 billion a year on these stupid weapons when infant nutrition and school lunches are cut back; student loans are cut back; the elderly forced to go without hearing aids and eat dog food; and 20% of the black population is unemployed?"[68] (At the planning sessions the previous fall, some moderates went so far as to suggest the Central Park rally avoid connecting the arms race to its social cost at home, arguing this could alienate fiscal conservatives who might otherwise support the freeze. This strategy was being pursued in California's 1982 freeze referendum campaign, where no mention was made of transferring money saved from arms spending to domestic programs in the ballot question. Throughout the day on June 12, those connections were repeatedly made.)[69] As three quarters of a million people rallied for a nuclear weapons freeze in Central Park, they were joined on the other coast by over 50,000 who attended a simultaneous freeze rally in San Francisco.[70] Two days later, over 1,000 activists were arrested in front of the United Nations building protesting the arms race. The decision was made to segregate civil disobedience from the legal march to avoid alienating moderates; thus the direct actions took place on June 14. Among those attending the Saturday rally and arrested the following Monday was Traprock founder, Judith Sheckel. Upon returning to western Massachusetts, Sheckel was ecstatic: "The joy at the rally was intense. We are so bombarded daily by images of violence in the media that it was a

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[68] Meyer, 187-8.

[69] Cockburn and Ridgeway, "The Freeze Movement Versus Ronald Reagan", 11.

[70] Meyer, 186.

moving experience to see so many people who are so loving, patient and peaceful to one another."[71]

For most of those who attended, the June 12 freeze rally was a joyous affirmation of life in the cause of preventing nuclear death. There were, however, some undercurrents of tension at the event. A week before the rally, Israel had invaded Lebanon in a move that drew a good deal of criticism, some of it from within Israel itself. Some at the rally wished to denounce the Israeli invasion and emphasize that Israel, was another nuclear power. In the end, radical MIT professor Noam Chomsky and veteran activist David Dellinger were the only two speakers to broach the potentially divisive issue.[72] Dellinger and radical colleague Sidney Lens offered further criticisms a short time later, charging the relatively moderate freeze movement had "not yet generated the same kind of idealism of the 60s and 70s on the campuses and among working class youth... In the Vietnam War, we didn't make progress until we took an absolutist position on withdrawal." [73] For others, the broad base visible at the rally made it an unqualified success. Elected officials who had been gradually embracing the freeze were especially pleased. Congressman Markey called the freeze "a middle class movement", adding, "These are people with real clout in their communities."[74]

In many ways, the June 12, 1982 Central Park freeze rally marked the culmination of two years of rapid growth through grassroots organizing. At the rally,

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[71] Amherst Bulletin, June 23, 1982.

[72] Cockburn and Ridgeway, "The Freeze Movement Versus Ronald Reagan", 12.

[73] Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway, "Peace in Central Park", The Village Voice, June 22, 1982; Meyer, 210-11.

[74] Waller, 108.

Forsberg had taken up the chant, "We'll remember come November."[75] Increasingly after June 12, 1982, the focus of the national freeze movement shifted from the grassroots to the halls of Congress and the campaign trail.

The Freeze Goes to Congress: The Kennedy-Hatfield-Conte-Bingham-Markey Nuclear Weapons Freeze Resolution

From the beginning of the 1980 freeze referendum campaign in western Massachusetts, activists had hoped to win over elected officials to pro-freeze positions. Moving to St, Louis, Kehler worked to keep the focus of the NWFC on building grassroots support first, and then focusing that support on Congress when the time was right. By 1982, the national movement had begun to make the shift. The first member of Congress to feel the pressure of the growing freeze movement was moderate Republican Silvio Conte of the Massachusetts First Congressional district, which encompassed most of the movement's stronghold in western Massachusetts. During the 1980 referendum campaign, Conte had belatedly endorsed the freeze, and subsequent to the campaign, local freeze activists sought to hold Conte's feet to the fire.[76] Over the next several years, freeze activists from the first district inundated Conte with pro-freeze letters, petitions and office visits. At public meetings in Northampton and Greenfield, in spring of 1981, activists confronted Conte, chanting, "Kill the cuts! Cut the killing!" One working mother exclaimed, "You want to spend $100 billion on the MX, but you won't spend two billion on food stamps for hungry people!" [77]

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[75] Meyer, 187.

[76] Waller, 35.

[77] Traprock Report, Vol. II, #3, June 1981. Traprock Peace Center Records.

By 1982, Conte became one of the most visible supporters of a freeze resolution in Congress. Along with Oregon Republican Mark Hatfield, he emerged as the main Republican freeze proponents in Congress, giving the campaign the bipartisan appearance the movement sought. Conte sponsored the first and second attempts at passing freeze resolutions in Congress in 1982 and 1983, attributing his sponsorship to "the groundswell of public sentiment against the frightening buildup of nuclear weapons."[78] The Oregon Senator and Massachusetts Congressman were among Washington's most colorful characters. Conte had a reputation for flamboyance, especially during his "pork of the year awards" when he would put on a plastic pig nose, and before media cameras denounce "pork barrel spending" in Congress, singling out particularly egregious examples. Hatfield was to the left of most Democrats on many issues, first proposing a freeze as part of the SALT II accords in 1979, and regularly denouncing U.S. intervention in Central America. The freeze was always a personal issue for Hatfield who as a naval officer in the Pacific had walked through the ruins of Hiroshima in late 1945. Hatfield remembered, "I could not help but be so totally overwhelmed by the utter and indiscriminate destruction... Looking in one direction or any other direction in that city, there was nothing but a mass of rubble and the stench of rotting human life... I had a sense of ambivalence about the kind of power that had been unleashed in the world." [79]

Another Massachusetts Congressman who became a driving force behind a freeze resolution in Congress was Democrat Ed Markey, whose district encompassed

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[78] Traprock Report, Vol. III, #2, March 1982.

[79] Waller, 87.

working class neighborhoods north of Boston. Seen by his colleagues as a young firebrand, Markey had made a name for himself as an opponent of nuclear energy in the late 1970s, becoming especially visible on the issue after the near meltdown at Three Mile Island. More than any other member of Congress, Markey would work to shepherd the freeze through the House of Representatives. Markey's congressional aide, Douglass C. Waller, played a major role in Markey's relationship with activists in the freeze movement, and recounted the congressional campaign for a freeze resolution in his book, Congress and the Nuclear Freeze: An Inside Look at the Politics of a Mass Movement. Although Markey shared freeze activists concerns over nuclear war, the ambitious Congressman also saw the issue as a way to raise his visibility and recruit supporters. Waller is candid about this, describing how Markey's administrative assistant Peter Franchot had brought Randall Forsberg's "The Call" to Markey's attention. Franchot told Waller and Markey, "The freeze is going to sweep this country, I can feel it in my bones. And there's no reason why we shouldn't be in the middle of it."[80]

Most crucial of all was the endorsement by Edward Kennedy who had remained something of a sleeping giant when it came to the freeze. In early 1982, the Traprock Report wrote, "In spite of the success of the referendum and passage of the Freeze resolution in the Massachusetts House and Senate, Senators Kennedy and Tsongas … still have failed to endorse the Freeze publicly."[81] That soon changed. Confirming Kehler's account, one Kennedy staffer said, "We could all see that the movement was on

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[80] *Ibid.*, 47.

[81] Traprock Report, Vol. III, #1, January 1982. Traprock Peace Center Records.

the verge of a breakthrough... The Senator just wanted to get on top of it, harness all that energy, and bring it to Washington instead of just letting it go on."[82] On March 10, 1982, at a press conference held at American University's Kay Spiritual Life Center, Kennedy announced his support for the freeze and declared he and Hatfield would introduce the Kennedy-Hatfield Nuclear Weapons Freeze Resolution in the United States Senate.[83] The impact of the Kennedy endorsement was profound. Many in the freeze movement were thrilled to win such a powerful ally who would bring in greater establishment support. As Waller notes, "... Kennedy had not only become the liberal leader of his party, but was also the voice of the liberals, capable of defining and setting the agenda among the established left. For diehard liberals, a wink and a nod from Kennedy were enough to spark a flame under an issue. In the case of the freeze, Kennedy built a bonfire, and the faithful responded in droves."[84] Others were critical, accusing Kennedy of trying to co-opt the movement and make it an appendage of his presidential campaign.[85] Within weeks, however, Kennedy aides working with members of Senator Hatfield's staff, had put together a book under the senators' names, Freeze!: Or How You Can Help Prevent Nuclear War. [86]Although at times technical in nature, the work included a section dealing with the 1980 western Massachusetts referendum campaign and was dedicated to "all members of the nuclear freeze movement who have awakened

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[82] Meyer, 224.

[83] Waller, 66-7.

[84] *Ibid*

[85] Cockburn and Ridgeway, "The Freeze Movement Versus Ronald Reagan." 21.

[86] Edward M. Kennedy and Mark O. Hatfield, Freeze! Or How You Can Help Prevent Nuclear War (Toronto; New York: Bantam Books, 1982).

the conscience of our country and are proving anew that individuals truly can make a difference." The Traprock Report described the book as an "excellent handbook".[87]

Kennedy's endorsement led to numerous endorsements by Senators and Representatives as Kennedy's staff worked the halls of Congress. Kennedy decided to pursue a joint resolution of Congress rather than a concurrent resolution, which meant that the President would be forced to sign or veto the measure, despite the fact that constitutionally, it could only be an advisory resolution. In the House, Conte, Markey and veteran New York Democrat Jonathan Bingham sponsored the Kennedy-Hatfield Resolution. The "Kennedy-Hatfield-Conte-Bingham-Markey" Resolution soon received the co-sponsorship of eighteen senators and 115 Representatives[88]. Randy Kehler and others at the NWFC headquarters in St. Louis believed Kennedy and Markey were moving too fast in Congress, but Kennedy insisted on forging ahead with or without the national movement's endorsement. Kennedy staffer Jan Kalicki and Markey aide Douglass Waller now became full-time *liaisons* with the NWFC, meeting regularly with its leadership and attending the group's conventions. Tensions emerged as some activists accused Kennedy and Markey of watering down the freeze resolution by taking out the words "immediate freeze" and instead calling on the president to "decide when and how" to negotiate a freeze with the Soviet Union. Waller and Kalicki informed the movement that these changes were necessary to assure moderates' support. The congressional staffers worked to modify other movement demands. Sources of tension included the NWFC's demands that the freeze resolution target funding for specific

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[87] Traprock Report, Vol. III, #3, May 1982. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[88] Meyer, 224.

weapons systems and oppose deployment of the Euromissiles. Waller and Kalicki generally prevailed in these debates, arguing the latter demands would eat into moderate support for the freeze resolution.[89]

The staff of Congressman Edward Markey became the spearhead of the professionalization of the freeze movement. Markey formed a pro-freeze political action committee called the "United States Committee Against Nuclear War". Advising members included such Democratic liberals as Philip Burton of California, Barbara Mikulski of Maryland, Peter Rodino, Jr. of New Jersey, Patricia Schroeder of Colorado, Paul Simon of Illinois and Morris Udall of Arizona. In a 1983 fundraising letter for the political action committee , Markey wrote:

> We formed the Committee to help insure the passage of the Freeze resolution I sponsored in the House, and a similar one sponsored by Senators Kennedy and Hatfield in the Senate… For too long, my colleagues in the House have been intimidated by massive New Right war chests accumulated early in the election cycle for the purpose of convincing them that they must support the arms race or face defeat at the polls… Therefore, if we are to win in the House this month we must have the resources which demonstrate our strength in the country.[90]

After the Kennedy endorsement, even the NWFC's focus shifted increasingly from grassroots activism to congressional lobbying. The Freeze Newsletter became Freeze Focus, and stories about civil disobedience in the U.S. or the mass peace marches in Europe gave way to an almost exclusive focus on the campaign in Congress and national elections. Meanwhile, the NWFC took on more of the feel of a professional

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[89] Waller, 175-9.

[90] Fundraiser: United States Committee Against Nuclear War, A Political Action Committee for a Nuclear Freeze, *circa* 1983, Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

organization as it hired experienced lobbyists, researchers and public relations people.[91] Emblematic of this professionalization was a packet of slick, highly professional-looking ads disseminated by the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Clearinghouse for use as local groups saw fit. Each was designed to address a specific area of concern. The letter coming with the packet stated:

> This campaign is too important to involve only 'peace people'... Thus we have tried to focus on mainstream Americans who are fearful of nuclear war yet distrust the Russians... [The public] is not overly susceptible to traditional 'movement' methods of mass communication... Because we don't want to turn people off before they hear the message, we have purposely avoided the traditional movement images of peace doves, missiles or mushroom clouds... Rather we have tried to elicit a positive response by connecting the Freeze with agreeable or even pleasant image associations.[92]

One ad juxtaposed a photo of Admiral Gene LaRoque with the word "Enough", and a quote from the admiral on the "Myth of Soviet Nuclear Superiority". Another showed a fuzzy license plate with discernible numbers with the caption, "We Got Their Number" and a short paragraph beginning, "You're looking at an actual Russian license plate as it might appear from an American satellite." The ad then made the case that a freeze could be verified due to American high-resolution satellite photography. Others showed mainstream Americans such as a construction worker and a mother with children raising concerns about a freeze that the respective ads briefly addressed. Each ended with, "Freeze. Because No One Wants a Nuclear War."[93]

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[91] Meyer, 206.

[92] "Beginner's Luck", cover letter accompanying freeze ad kit. The letter and all twelve ads are in the Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection. The creators of the ads claimed to be non-professional volunteers, but it is clear from the letter and the ads that they were very familiar with modern marketing theories.

[93] *Ibid.*

With the turn towards professionalization, activists faded from national prominence and Kennedy and Markey became the most frequently interviewed and quoted spokespeople for the national freeze movement.[94] As the freeze movement underwent these transformations gradually after the June 12, 1982 Central park rally, the movement made further inroads into moderate support, but began seeing a steady stream out of the movement by radicals who felt the freeze had become too mainstream and found the militancy of the growing Central American solidarity campaign more in line with their brand of activism.[95]

The erosion of the freeze movement's base, however, was still in the future in the spring of 1982. The events of that spring – "Ground ZeroWeek", introduction of the Kennedy-Hatfield Resolution in the House and Senate, and the Central Park rally – raised the national profile of the freeze movement to a headline story and media saturation. Kehler recalled that at this time, "the freeze was hot.... [with] the media hyping it, to tell you the truth, larger than life."[96] The Reagan administration could no longer ignore the movement and sent out administration figures and supporters to challenge the freeze on the airwaves, in print and on the lecture circuit. Alexander Haig denounced it as dangerous arms control policy which would weaken America while conservative members of Congress accused the movement of promoting "unilateral disarmament". To counter the huge religious support the freeze had mustered, Rev. Jerry Falwell denounced the "freezeniks" and accused the movement of promoting atheism

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[94] Meyer., 128.

[95] *Ibid.*, 263.

[96] Interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003. Of the saturation coverage, Kehler said, "In the end that hurt us."

and surrender in the cold war.[97] Inevitably, the freeze movement found itself red baited as members of the administration now insinuated the movement was funded and guided behind the scenes by the KGB. Reagan charged the freeze "was inspired not by the sincere, honest people who want peace, but by some who want the weakening of America and so are manipulating many honest and sincere people."[98] Reader's Digest published an article by John Barron in which the writer claimed three intelligence officers told him the KGB directed the freeze. Ronald Reagan, citing the article, declared that the Soviet Union "saw an advantage in a peace movement built around the idea of a nuclear freeze... There is no question about foreign agents that were sent to help instigate and help create and keep such a movement going." [99] Passing the president's notice was the fact that one month prior to his charges of Soviet infiltration, Randy Kehler was urging freeze supporters to write the Soviet government to free Sergei Batrovin, a dissident Soviet peace activist then being held in a Soviet mental hospital.[100] Mark Hatfield responded to Reagan's charges, "I fought the communists in China when I was with the Navy. I fought them on the platforms in a debate on an ideological basis. I just haven't found one in the nuclear freeze movement."[101]

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[97] Greenfield Recorder, March 9. 1983.

[98] Waller, 79.

[99] "Magazine Article Cited in KGB-Freeze Link", Washington Post, November 13, 1982.

[100] "Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting", Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, September 28, 1982. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[101] "Magazine Article Cited in KGB-Freeze Link", Washington Post, November 13, 1982. Certainly pro-Soviet organizations, including the American Communist Party and the World Peace Council, endorsed the freeze. Such organizations, however, seem merely to have attached themselves to a popular movement. Their influence was marginal, unlike Europe, where various Communist Parties played a more prominent role, although usually advocated tactics to the right of the rest of the European peace movement. See Breyman.

The Reagan adminstration's efforts to red bait the movement seem to have backfired. Congressman Markey believed the administration's attacks only raised the profile of the freeze and solidified its support due to the charge's baselessness.[102] Riding the popular momentum of the movement, the House Foreign Affairs Committee, chaired by freeze supporter Jonathon Bingham, reported out a favorable freeze resolution 28-8 on June 23, 1982.[103] The support of Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill assured the resolution made its way to the House floor. Before the vote, O'Neill, who as a congressman in 1953 had witnessed an atomic test, declared, "Anybody that ever saw one of those bombs must wonder why we did not start this freeze long ago."[104] Silvio Conte inveighed, "The resolution before us incorporates the mandate of those growing millions to get on with meaningful arms limitation and reduction and at the same time to stop – I say again, stop – the endless nuclear buildup between the Soviet Union and the United States."[105] Ed Markey proclaimed, "I am proud to say that today in the House we are voting on a resolution that says we have learned from the horror of Hiroshima. This resolution says we want to freeze the nuclear arms race so we don't drift closer and closer to a nuclear holocaust that would have the destructive force of one million Hiroshimas."[106]

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[102] *Ibid.*, 78.

[103] Meyer, 227-8.

[104] "Nuclear Freeze Narrowly Fails in House of Representatives", Nuclear Freeze Foundation, *circa* August 1982. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[105] *Ibid.*

[106] *Ibid.*

Republican conservatives like Illinois' Representative Henry Hyde fiercely attacked the bill as weakening America's defenses and freezing in Soviet superiority. The Reagan administration countered by having Senators John Warner (R-VA) and hawkish Democrat Henry "Scoop" Jackson introduce a counter amendment in the Senate, which called for a freeze of nuclear weapons, but only after the administration's current buildup was complete and had resulted in Soviet reductions. Markey denounced the Jackson-Warner amendment, which was introduced into the House debate by Representative William S. Broomfield (R-MI), as a "phony freeze". After heated debate, in its first test on August 5, 1982, the Conte-Markey-Bingham freeze amendment lost to the Broomfield alternative by a razor thin margin, 202-204.[107] Meanwhile, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee rejected Kennedy-Hatfield for Jackson-Warner by a vote of 12-5.[108]

Despite the defeat, many freeze proponents were buoyed by a defeat of only two votes on the eve of congressional elections. Kennedy declared, "By the narrowest of margins, the nuclear freeze may have lost in the House of Representatives, but it is winning day by day in the country, and I am confident that it will prevail at the polling places in November and beyond."[109] Randy Kehler responded, "We are disappointed that the majority of the House of Representatives today voted against a U.S.-Soviet freeze on the nuclear arms race. At the same time, we are greatly elated that a near majority voted for the Freeze. This vote demonstrates the great progress that the Freeze campaign has

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[107] Meyer, 227-8.

[108] *Ibid.*

[109] "Nuclear Freeze Narrowly Fails in House of Representatives", Nuclear Freeze Foundation, *circa* August 1982. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

made since March of this year... The real vote, however, will come this fall, when millions of freeze supporters, in thousands of communities across the country assess candidates for Congress on the basis of their stand on the Freeze." [110]

The closeness of the House vote, in tandem with the growing public support for the freeze, now focused movement attention on the upcoming congressional elections in which Democrats hoped to reverse the Republican gains of 1980. The results augured well for the freeze movement. The freeze movement won impressive state referendum victories in Michigan, Montana, New Jersey, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island and, of course, Massachusetts. The campaign won a hard-fought victory in California, where the movement ran into opposition from the state's aerospace industry.[111] Only Arizona, where Barry Goldwater lobbied hard against it, defeated a freeze referendum. The freeze likewise passed in 36 of 38 cities and towns where it was on the ballot.[112] In a press release for the NWFC, Randall Forsberg crowed:

> Yesterday's vote on the Freeze sends a clear and unprecedented mandate to the U.S. Government to propose to the Soviet Union an immediate, mutual and verifiable freeze on the arms race. The overall vote count favored the Freeze by a margin of 60% to 40%... Voters favored the Freeze in industrial states... in rural plains states... and in metropolitan areas... The Freeze passed in California where the Reagan administration worked hard to defeat the proposition. Support for the Freeze cuts across traditional conservative-liberal lines... Building on this decisive victory, the national Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign will mount a massive grassroots effort to persuade Congress and the Administration to carry out the wishes of the majority of the American people.[113]

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[110] *Ibid.*

[111] Cockburn and Ridgeway, "The Freeze Movement Versus Ronald Reagan", 11.

[112] Waller, 164-5.

[113] Press Release, Randall Forsberg, Chair of the National Advisory Board, Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, November 1982. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

In the House of Representatives, the Democrats picked up twenty-six seats. Although this was in large measure due to the recession, which had seen unemployment go over 10%, the freeze movement believed it now had the numbers to push the freeze through the House of Representatives.[114]

In the spring of 1983, Kennedy, Conte and Markey geared up for another effort at getting a freeze resolution through Congress. At one meeting, over seventy Massachusetts activists met with Kennedy, Massachusetts's junior senator Paul Tsongas, who had belatedly endorsed the freeze, and Conte. Western Massachusetts members of the delegation gave Conte 4,000 "proxy votes" for the freeze they had collected back home, thanked him for his past support and encouraged him to work even harder for the freeze.[115] The movement scored its first victory of 1983 in March when the House Foreign Affairs Committee once again passed a freeze resolution, this time 27-9.[116] In June, the full House met to consider what was now called the "Zablocki resolution" after Foreign Affairs Committee Chair Clement Zablocki (D-WI). Congress embarked on fifty hours of contentious debate and numerous attempts by Republicans to substitute amendments favorable to the president's position on nuclear weapons and arms control in what Markey charged was "filibuster by amendment". Proponents of the freeze fought back seventeen amendments.[117] Critics of the Zablocki bill argued it would lock in a putative Soviet nuclear weapons superiority. In response to the charges being thrown at the freeze proposal in the House, Senator Kennedy responded, "No one in authority,

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[114] *Ibid.*

[115] Traprock Report, Vol. III, #8, March 1983. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[116] *Ibid.*

[117] Waller, 258.

including President Reagan, would trade our deterrent for Soviet forces."[118] As debate dragged on, Markey sighed, "I wanted the Freeze to be the debate of the decade, not a decade of debate."[119]

Finally, exhausted members of the House adopted a pro-administration amendment, introduced by conservative Democrat Elliot Levitas of Georgia, which supported a freeze but stated a U.S.-Soviet freeze would be invalidated should no actual reductions of weapons come about shortly after adoption. Other amendments were adopted stating that the resolution would not affect current weapons systems or planned deployment of the Euromissiles.[120] The last to speak was the Speaker, Tip O'Neill:

> We have concluded a long, and at times trying debate... The freeze issue, in my opinion, has finally been drawn. We are ready to choose a historic course, whether to continue the policies of the past... or to chart a new path. The freeze supporters all across the country spoke clearly last November and will now speak through their representatives. They want an end to the arms race. They want the leaders of the superpowers to recognize that the on-rushing train of nuclear weapons must be stopped. That is also my personal desire. [121]

The House of Representatives then voted 278-149 for the joint resolution. Many freeze supporters were crestfallen at the number of amendments, which they believed diluted the resolution's message. Leon Panetta (D-CA) summed up the elasticity of the resolution: "Whether you are a hawk or a dove or something in between... When you go back home... you can say anything you want about this legislation." [122] The ambivalence

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[118] *Ibid.*, 78.

[119] *Ibid.*,258.

[120] *Ibid.*, 286; Meyer, 231.

[121] Waller, 285.

[122] Meyer, 231.

among freeze activists took a turn toward demoralization when the Senate defeated the Kennedy-Hatfield freeze resolution 40-58 on October 31, 1983. Three weeks later, the House voted to fund the MX missile 239-186. The Senate followed suit soon thereafter 59-39.[123]

Showdown in Europe

The failure of the freeze resolution in the Senate came just weeks before the planned deployment of U.S. Cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe, scheduled to begin on November 23, 1983. Many freeze and disarmament proponents had hoped to stop deployment of these new weapons, which gave the United States a hair-trigger first strike capability. The high velocity Pershing II could reach the Soviet Union in less than ten minutes and the Cruise was designed to fly beneath Soviet radar. Throughout October, Western Europe was rocked by a paroxysm of protests that marked the culmination of three years of demonstrations. Over a half-million gathered in Rome and 400,000 in Amsterdam to protest impending installation of the Euromissiles. On October 15, over one million West Germans turned out to protest across the Federal Republic, from Bonn to Hamburg to Berlin. In the Schwabian region of West Germany, over 200,000 demonstrators clasped hands and formed a 70-mile human chain surrounding U.S. bases in Stuttgart and Ulm, which were scheduled to receive Pershing II missiles.[124]

In the United States, the national freeze movement had agreed to downplay the Euromissile debate, largely at the advice of Kennedy and Markey aides Jan Kalicki and

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[123] *Ibid.*, 232.

[124] Breyman, 193-6.

Douglass Waller, who believed open opposition to the Euromissiles would be perceived as calls for "unilateral disarmament". The NWFC nevertheless continued to lobby Congress to delay installment of the Euromissiles.[125] Some activists, however, had moved to oppose the Euromissiles on their own in a more radical fashion. On July 4, 1983 over 2,000 women had begun camping out at the U.S. Seneca Army Depot in Romulus, New York through which a number of Pershing missiles were scheduled to pass in transit to Europe. The women created what they called the "Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice", which remained throughout the summer, swelling at times to over 6,000 women. At the camp, radical lesbians worked with older, more conventional activists from the historic peace movements, and feminist criticisms of the arms race were emphasized. Conservative local townsfolk saw the camp as an invasion of "communists" and "lesbians". On August 1, over 240 of the women scaled a six foot fence and were arrested at the base in a direct action protest of the Pershing II missiles, among them a number of Massachusetts activists. Frances Crowe was among those arrested, stating, "It was terribly empowering to climb the fence... I'd never climbed a fence before. I decided I needed to put my body into the machine that's creating madness." The U.S. Army dropped the trespassing charges but ordered the women to stay away from the base.[126]

The simultaneous campaigns to win Senate approval of a freeze resolution, defeat the MX and stop the Euromissiles suffered a devastating blow in late August with news that the Soviet Union had shot down a South Korean passenger jet, KAL 007,

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[125] "Decisions Made By the Third National Conference of the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign", St. Louis, Missouri, February 4-6, 1983. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[126] Greenfield Recorder, September 6, 1983.

which had crossed into Soviet airspace. The downing, which left no survivors, unleashed a torrent of anti-Soviet hostility in the United States. In a letter to local organizers, the MWFC advised, "The incident of the shooting down of the Korean airliner by the Soviets continues to be a major area of concern... There seems to be a sense in Congress at the present time that it might be best to let the emotional fervor around the Korean issue die down before getting a vote on the MX or the Senate Freeze resolution. In other words, the further from the airliner movement, the better the possibility there is for a more positive vote on both issues."[127] The memo also suggested that "to move the nation past its grief and anger... it is important right now to acknowledge the tragedy when doing press work. It is important right now to point to the arms control lessons inherent in the tragedy."[128]

During the period from October 21-24, 1983, U.S. peace activists held numerous legal rallies to protest deployment of the Euromissiles. Over 6,000 demonstrated on the Boston Commons, where John Olver was among the speakers.[129] Earlier in the year, western Massachusetts activists had begun a petition campaign to Representative Conte under the banner, "Support the Freeze. Freeze the Euromissiles." The petition read: "We urge you to support the amendment soon to be introduced, to delay by one year the deployment of the Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe."[130] In October, the petition drive paid off when Conte wrote a letter to his fellow Republican, President Ronald

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[127] "Dear Local Organizer", NWFC,September 14, 1983. Franees Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Colleetion.

[128] *Ibid.* In mid-October, Randy Kehler discussed the impact of the KAL 007 incident in a letter to freeze organizers.

[129] Traprock Report, Vol. III, #12, October 1983. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[130] Daily Hampshire Gazette, May 25, 1983.

Reagan, stating, "We believe that a statesman-like initiative to delay the deployment clock is essential at this critical time. In fact, it may be the best hope we have to reverse the direction of the arms race and establish a new momentum for nuclear arms control." Conte's letter was co-signed by Congressman Markey, Senator Kennedy and Oregon Senator, Mark Hatfield. Most of Congress, however, remained solidly behind the Euromissiles.[131]

By late October, it was clear the trans-Atlantic protests were not going to be able to stop deployment of the Cruise and Pershing II missiles, funding for the MX or win Senate support for a freeze resolution. The backlash engendered by the KAL 007 incident was compounded that fall by a terrorist attack on a U.S. military compound in Lebanon, killing 241 marines, and the U.S. invasion of Grenada a week later, setting off a wave triumphant nationalism across the nation. In a section of a letter to organizers subtitled, "1982 and 1983 Ups and Downs", Kehler discussed the movement's bleak prospects:

> Suddenly, at the end of August, we were all hit with the shocking news of the KAL-007 disaster, which triggered a hurricane of anti-Soviet hysteria. Although U.S. intelligence experts now say that the Soviet fighter pilots probably did not know they were shooting at a civilian airliner, and despite many people's doubts about the true mission of the KAL plane, President Reagan seems to have successfully exploited the incident to pick up additional support for his nuclear arms program in Congress... It is now mid-October, and the prospect for victories at the national level is not good. The Freeze resolution in the Senate is not expected to pass, the anti-MX forces still face an uphill struggle, and our legislative efforts to delay the deployment of the Cruise and Pershing II missiles, scheduled to begin in December, face even tougher opposition? Who can help but feel some discouragement?[132]

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[131] *Ibid.* , November 21, 1983.

[132] "Where We've Been and Where We're Going", Randy Kehler, NWFC Letter, October 1983.

Anticipating a post-deployment depression in the ranks, Randy Kehler wrote another letter to activists, which attempted to boost sagging morale in the face of impending deployment of the Euromissiles. It read in part:

> We will continue to struggle as hard as we can against the deployment. But we must also recognize that if the deployment does take place, a mutual freeze, far from being invalidated by that deployment, will become more urgent than ever. Yes, it will also be more difficult, given the likely Soviet counter-escalation, and no doubt we will be living in a more perilous world. But the initial premise of this campaign still holds true; stopping the arms race is not a question of technical feasibility, it is a question of political will. Missiles deployed now can be undeployed later if there is a will on both sides to do it... Despite short-term obstacles we face, the very progress we have made should give us great hope for the future. With a little staying power, and a lot of heart, our efforts will prevail.[133]

On November 23, 1983, the first nine Pershing II missiles reached the Federal Republic of Germany, soon followed by a steady stream of more Pershing II and Cruise missiles to their assigned stations.[134] Coming so closely on the heels of the defeat of the freeze in the Senate and passage of appropriations for the MX (the politically most vulnerable missile pursued by the administration), the deployment of the Euromissiles represented a real nadir for the disarmament movement in the United States. After an exhilarating three years of expansion, accompanied by many emotional peaks, a sense of demoralization began to set on the freeze movement.

The sense of fatigue and despair that began to pervade the movement in the fall of 1983 was compounded by ABC's broadcast of the television movie, "The Day After". Broadcast on Sunday night, November 20, 1983, the movie, starring Jason Robbards featured a dramatic depiction of the affects of a nuclear war on Lawrence, Kansas.

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[133] Traprock Report, Vol. III, #12, October 1983. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[134] Breyman, 204-5.

Although the movie helped drive home a message the freeze movement had been making for three years, coming in the wake of the Soviet downing of Korean Airliners 007 the previous September, the defeat of the freeze in the Senate, passage of the MX and deployment of the Euromissiles, many in the movement feared the film's timing would add to a growing sense of helplessness and fatalism.[135] Local freeze groups organized "How to Avoid the Day After" discussion groups, advised members not to watch the movie alone, offered advice on how to discuss the film with children, and generally encouraged members to fight any sense of helplessness the movie might evoke.[136]

Direct Action in the Age of the Freeze

While the freeze movement worked to build grassroots support and endorsements from elected officials, a number of committed activists continued to carry out direct action protests of the nuclear arms race. The first major action occurred on September 9, 1980 at the General Electric factory in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, where a group calling itself the "Plowshares 8" hammered on the nose cone of two Minutemen missiles and poured their own blood over blueprints and tools causing approximately $10-$40,000 of damage. Among the Plowshares 8 was Vietnam-era radical priests Daniel and Philip Berrigan, whose involvement, along with their lawyer, former Attorney General Ramsey Clark, assured the action widespread publicity. In their first trial in 1981, the defendants were sentenced to 3-10 years; however, the sentences were thrown

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[135] Traprock Report, Vol. III, #2, October 1983.

[136] *Ibid.*

out on appeal and the case remained in the news throughout the 1980s, becoming a *cause celebre* among American radicals.[137]

Massachusetts freeze activists, predominantly from faith-based groups seeking ways to carry out "moral witness" against the arms race, were especially involved in direct action campaigns of the early 1980s. In the summer of 1981, the Committee for Creative Non-Violence organized a "Call to Prayer and Resistance" in which the centerpiece was a civil disobedience action at the White House. Seven western Massachusetts activists, including Frances Crowe of the Northampton AFSC, Traprock's Judith Sheckel and Ruth Benn of the Amherst Disarmament Coalition joined 124 other activists, who, after breaking away from a White House tour, sat in the White House driveway and prayed for "survival of the human race" and denounced recent budget cuts for human services. The group, which included veteran civil rights activist, Dick Gregory, was arrested on charges of "unlawful entry" and taken to separate male and female prisons.[138] The arrestees issued a lengthy statement to explain their action:

> We feel our symbolic action is both warranted and appropriate. We are convinced that the world's peace and the future of mankind are so seriously threatened that we must resort to civil disobedience. Dr. Martin Luther King stated that non-violent direct action 'seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored.' We believe that the threat of nuclear war and the escalating arms race that makes such a threat possible, is the most important issue of our time... We believe the threat of nuclear war increases daily, yet we are optimistic that positive change can, and will take place. We call upon the President, in the interest of national security, to initiate a proposal for a mutual U.S-U.S.S.R. nuclear weapons freeze. This would be the first step toward nuclear disarmament.[139]

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[137] Meyer., 198-201.

[138] Amherst Record, July 1, 1981; Morning Union, June 25, 1981.

[139] Amherst News, June 20, 1981.

At the hearings in June 1981, some observers believed the judge was sympathetic to the defendants who pleaded guilty to unlawful entry, received six months suspended sentences, three months probation and were firmly instructed by the judge to stay out of the White House.[140] The case received national attention and helped elevate the profile of Frances Crowe, who, with Sheckel and Kehler, had been among the driving forces behind the 1980 freeze resolution in western Massachusetts. Crowe was already well known as one of the Bay State's most colorful activists and effective organizers, especially skilled at drawing new recruits into various social movements. Upon receiving the New England Award for Excellence in Social Justice Actions in 1981, the speaker introducing Crowe stated, "I can think of no one who more fully embodies the call of Jesus in Luke 4 to 'set at liberty those who are oppressed.'"[141] Crowe played an active and leading role in the movement against the Vietnam War and against nuclear energy in the 1970s. During the 1980s, she would also be actively involved with the Central American Solidarity movement and the campaign against apartheid in South Africa. Unlike many in the freeze and disarmament movements, Crowe could date her opposition to nuclear weapons to the dawn of the atomic age. Crowe recalled the fateful moment in a 1982 speech on the subject:

> Thirty-seven years ago, when I heard the news over the radio of the bombing of Hiroshima... I was shocked beyond understanding... I was alone... a bride in New Orleans waiting for Tom to return from his duty in the U.S. Army. I was overwhelmed with a feeling of shock and grief. I unplugged the iron... left the place mat I was ironing and went out to wander the streets of the French Quarter looking for a supportive group to share my feelings with... the closest I came was a second hand book store

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[140] Valley Advocate, June 30, 1981.

[141] United Methodist Reporter, June 12, 1981.

> owner who sold me some books on the nature of war. The changes that have taken place in my personal life since then and in the society the past thirty-seven years seem more than I am able to absorb.[142]

Crowe traces her activism back to her schoolgirl days in Carthage, Missouri during the 1930s, where she led a failed petition campaign to have her high school provide a gym class for girls as well as boys. "My mother gave me a vision," recalls Crowe, "she told me to go places in the world."[143] Crowe said of Carthage, "There was a lot of classism and racism there. The Ku Klux Klan were very strong in our community, and as members of a small Catholic Church we were targeted."[144] After spending two years at Stephen's College, an all-women's college in Missouri, Crowe completed a degree in psychology at Syracuse University.

Crowe underwent important changes during World War II. She took on war work at the Sperry and Bell Labs plants in New York, while she worked toward a graduate degree at nights at Columbia and then the New School for Social research. "I was a 'Rosie the Riveter'", recalled Crowe, "... and then the war was over and we women were told to go home, back to the kitchen and have children."[145]

"I started to get politicized then", remembered Crowe of her years at the Sperry and Bell plants during World War II.[146] According to Crowe, "I'd been so idealistic for my country, and then I was seeing all this waste and greed around me. Other people

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[142] Frances Crowe draft speech, *circa* 1982.Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[143] Undated newspaper article, *circa* 1983. Frances Crowe Private Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

[144] "Journey of Conscience", Frances Crowe draft speech, *circa* 1982. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[145] Valley Advocate, March 24, 1982.

[146] *Ibid.*

weren't idealistic; they were there to make money from the war. I was getting really turned off. By the time the United States dropped the bomb on Hiroshima, I was ready to be a pacifist."[147] In many ways, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki became the guiding motif of Crowe's life. "Spirtual passivity is the first death, nuclear holocaust is the second death," Crowe would later repeat. Crowe gradually gravitated in the direction of the Quakers, stating, "My conscience didn't feel comfortable with Catholic belief." Looking back at her evolution toward radical pacifism, Crowe recalled, "When they dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima I became somewhat of a Quaker in belief overnight.... I felt that was the wrong thing to do. So much killing."[148] At the end of the war, Crowe married a physicist and radiologist, Dr. Thomas Crowe, whose expertise gave Frances Crowe a deeper understanding than most Americans of the dangers of radiation.[149]

Thomas and Frances Crowe settled down in the late 1940s and 1950s, having three children, Caltha, Jareth and Tom. Crowe described herself during these years as a "traditional housewife and mother". One of the Crowe children, Jareth, was born deaf so Frances and Thomas moved to Northampton, Massachusetts to be near its prestigious Clark School for the Deaf.[150] In the late 1950s, Crowe gravitated in the direction of the growing "Ban the Bomb" movement. In 1980, she recalled of this period, "It took us a long time after the first bomb was dropped to realize the dangers to humans of atomic radiation. Literature came to our home in the early 1960s on the dangers of open air

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[147] *Ibid.*

[148] Sunday Republican, November 16, 1980.

[149] *Ibid.*

[150] *Ibid.*

testing. I read it. I realized the dangers to my family. This was hitting close to home."[151] Crowe became active in SANE during the early 1960s' campaign for a nuclear test ban treaty. Later in the decade, Crowe's activist energies shifted toward opposing the Vietnam War. She organized daily pickets at Westover Air Base in Chicopee and ran the Pioneer Valley Peace Center, which offered draft counseling between 1968 and 1973. At times she had over seventy young men meeting in her office/basement. "I feel it was a real crisis in men's lives," she recalled, "People were coming to me desperate, looking for the quickest, easiest way out of military service. I tried to show them how they could respond in a human way."[152] Draft counseling became a crusade for Crowe, who managed to appear at local high schools along side military recruiters to discuss alternatives to military service.[153] Crowe also frequently drove between Northampton and Amherst, picking up young men hitchhiking on Route 9 and offered them draft counseling.[154] Crowe became a full time member of the American Friends Service Committee, declaring of the Quakers, "It's a small denomination, but its influence is way out of proportion to its size."[155]

After the war in Vietnam, Crowe became involved in the movement against nuclear energy; however, with the birth of the freeze movement, Crowe came full circle to the issue that more than any other set her on her activist path. Crowe particularly felt

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[151] *Ibid.*

[152] Frances Crowe draft speech, *circa* 1978-9. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.
[153] *Ibid.* On one occasion, when she felt military recruiters addressing students in an auditorium were taking more than their allotted five minutes, Crowe interrupted to say, "This isn't working... I suggest those of you opposed to war in any form and want to know about your legal options to military service, move to this side of the room." According to Crowe, all but five did.

[154] Interview with Frances Crowe, December 3, 1996.

[155] Sunday Republican, November 16, 1980.

invigorated by the rapid growth of the massive peace movement in Europe, which critics dismissed as Hollanditis" due to the strength of neutralist and disarmament sentiment in the Netherlands. "Hollanditis," Crowe declared, "Well, I have Hollanditis... and it's the best disease I've ever had... and I caught it from the Europeans... Seeing the pictures of the their huge demonstrations... talking to people who have been to Europe... it's very infectious."[156] For Crowe, "Hollanditis" was the antidote to the apathy she felt the arms race created: "... If one does not have a future, why struggle?"[157] Quoting a study by Yale psychologist Robert J. Lifton in which eighty percent of respondents purportedly said they believed they would die in a nuclear war, Crowe railed against the "psychic numbing" she felt pervaded American society, stating, " To endure the thought of possible annihilation of life on this planet results in many people turning to religious cults, drugs, alcohol, entertainment, pornography, excessive self-fulfillment [to] turn it off [and] flip the page."[158]

When the freeze movement began in the 1980s, Crowe, now in her sixties, was the veteran of many years of activism. She played a central role in the western Massachusetts referendum campaign of 1980 and gave the keynote address at the first national freeze conference. Like Anna Gyorgy and Sam Lovejoy, who took western Massachusetts' anti-nuclear energy gospel around the country, Crowe lectured for the freeze all over the United States. In a 1981 keynote speech for the first New Jersey freeze conference, Crowe declared, "I am here to talk to you about the problem of

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[156] "Keynote Speech to the First New Jersey Conference on the Freeze, 1981", Frances Crowe draft speech. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[157] *Ibid.*

[158] Frances Crowe draft speech, August 8, 1982. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

successfully gaining a state endorsement for the Mutual Nuclear Weapons Freeze... what we can do about it and to tell you what we did about it in western Massachusetts."[159] Crowe also had a long record of direct action experience and numerous arrests. The 5' 2'' Crowe was frequently amused at the perplexed reaction she often encountered from police arresting her for civil disobedience. Crowe observed, "One gets a lot of mileage out of white hair."[160] Crowe's civil disobedience at the White House was the first of several high profile actions she would take in the 1980s. Crowe's most spectacular direct action took place on October 3, 1983, as the freeze movement's influence in Congress appeared to be waning. Crowe and seven other women, five of whom were nuns, entered the Electric Boat plant at Quonset Point, Rhode Island, which produced Trident II submarine-based missiles, issued an "indictment" to the plant's personnel and then spray-painted "Thou Shalt Not Kill" on several missile casings.[161] Although it was Crowe's fourteenth arrest, the Electric Boat action resulted in the activist's first extended jail time. Crowe and her co-defendants were convicted of "malicious mischief" and sentenced to six months prison, all but thirty days of which were suspended, and fined approximately $150. Judge Albert DeRobbio ejected over thirty supporters of Crowe and the other defendants from the courtroom in South Kingston, Rhode Island for singing.[162]

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[159] "Keynote Speech to the First New Jersey Conference on the Freeze, 1981", Frances Crowe draft of speech. Frances Crowe Papers, Sophia Smith Collection.

[160] Boston Globe, January 2, 1984.

[161] Daily Hampshire Gazette, January 11, 1984.

[162] Undated newspaper clipping, *circa*, December 1983-January, 1984. Frances Crowe Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

Upon entering the Adult Correction Institution in Cranston, Rhode Island, Crowe was met by quizzical looks from the regular inmates. "I came in and I looked like I could be their grandmother," Crowe told a reporter upon her release.[163] Although Crowe was a vegetarian, she was only served meat in prison. "It was not easy," said Crowe, "it was prison."[164] While serving her prison term, the jail was flooded with letters of support for Crowe. The volume eventually reached a point where the prison could no longer inspect her letters and withheld Crowe's mail altogether. The incorrigible Crowe continued her political activity in prison, talking politics with the inmates and getting thirty-eight of them to sign a petition of support for Rev. Jesse Jackson's 1984 bid for the presidency.[165]

Jackson's Rainbow Coalition was a growing force in American politics, and Jackson was anxious to build bridges to the peace movement. Jackson interceded in an attempt to have Crowe and her fellow activists released early. (When Crowe was released after her mandated thirty days, Jackson mistakenly claimed credit for her "early release".) When Crowe was released, however, she made national news by holding a press conference with Jackson at the Olney St. Baptist Church in Providence. There, Crowe endorsed Jesse Jackson for president, declaring, "He's building a rainbow coalition, and I don't think we're going to get anywhere on ending the arms race unless blacks are involved. He's really trying to make peace a platform."[166] At the press

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[163] Undated newspaper clipping, Frances Crowe Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

[164] Springfield Union, February 6, 1984.

[165] *Ibid.*

[166] *Ibid.*

conference, Crowe and Jackson kissed. A photographer, whose photo was reprinted in Newsweek and numerous local newspapers, captured the moment.[167]

Denouement: Freeze Voter '84, SDI and the "Quick Freeze"

Entering 1984, much of the freeze movement was demoralized over the failures of the previous fall, when the Senate rejected the freeze, Congress funded the MX missile, and deployment of the Euromissiles proceeded on schedule. The focus in 1984 was on the upcoming presidential elections. The political action committee Freeze Voter '84 was formed at the NWFC meeting in St. Louis in late 1983. It represented the apex of the movement's professionalization, employing extensive direct mailing and the "bundling" of individual contributions. The goal was to "change the politicians" by focusing on pro-freeze candidates. All the Democratic candidates endorsed the freeze in some form. Freeze Voter '84 circulated a chart with the candidates' positions on major issues, such as the freeze, the Euromissiles, the MX, Trident II, the B-1 bomber and so forth. All the candidates except Jesse Jackson and long-shot George McGovern had supported at least one issue the freeze movement opposed. Thus, California Congressman Alan Cranston, the most solicitous of freeze movement support, passed each litmus test but one, his support for the B-1 bomber. Gary Hart had only endorsed the freeze late in the campaign, supported the Euromissile deployment but was strongly opposed to the MX.[168] Freeze supporters split among the candidates with some opting for the most viable and others for candidates with the purest records. In western

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[167] Clippings, Frances Crowe Private Papers. Northampton, Massachusetts.

[168] Traprock Report, Vol. IV, # 2, March 1984. Traprock Peace Center Records.

Massachusetts, an offshoot of the statewide freeze movement, "Elect the Freeze in '84", endorsed freeze activist Democrat Mary Wentworth over Republican Silvio Conte, who easily went on to re-election.[169]

The Democrats and the freeze movement were in for an uphill struggle. By early 1984, the painful recession of the early 1980s began to break. Shorn of the inflation that had plagued the economy in the 1970s, Reagan declared success for his economic remedies and proclaimed a new "morning in America". The freeze movement had risen against the backdrop of the recession, which seemed to spread a general pessimism throughout the nation. Further, the substantive cuts in social programs occurring simultaneously with defense increases at a time of economic hardship had played into the freeze movement's hands.

The early Reagan years had seen the "war winners" emerge as the public face of the Reagan administration's arms build up. Their often-belligerent rhetoric had done much to scare many Americans into the freeze movement's arms. Beginning in 1983, Ronald Reagan shifted his priorities to a new weapons system, the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), a proposed space defense that Reagan argued would end "mutually assured destruction" and usher in the end of the nuclear arms race. Although disarmament activists knew such a weapon was destabilizing, a violation of the 1972 ABM Treaty and likely to foster a new arms race, SDI allowed Reagan to change his rhetoric from the belligerent sounding themes of the "war winners" to the peaceful-sounding words of ending the arms race through a defensive shield.[170] Speaking of the

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[169] Meyer, 242-6.

[170] Frances Fitzgerald, Way Out There in the Blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the End of the Cold War (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.)

Republican platform on SDI, Kehler exclaimed, "It was just like ours. It said how deterrence is folly and immoral, and economically the arms race is killing us, and there's no [civil] defense against nuclear weapons anyway."[171] In her exhaustive study of the SDI program, Way Out There in the Blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the End of the Cold War, Frances Fitzgerald argues it was the freeze movement which tipped the balance in the Reagan administration away from its buildup policies to reliance on a proposed defensive shield. By 1982, argues Fitzgerald, "What the debate showed was that in just two years the freeze had achieved rhetorical dominance over the administration."[172] To sound more "reassuring" and "outflank" the freeze, the administration tied freeze rhetoric to its proposed SDI system. Kehler immediately recognized the movement's own words coming back at him from the White House. On the road to "Star Wars", Fitzgerald writes that few administration figures "mention a phenomenon of great importance to them at the time. Once this element is introduced, the story [of SDI] begins to make sense – otherwise it is like the score of a piano concerto with the piano part missing. The phenomenon is, of course, the anti-nuclear movement: the freeze."[173]

With a rebounding economy and the new emphasis on peace rather than war, the Reagan administration was able to move away from its biggest liabilities during its early years: the image of the president as heartless toward the poor and jobless, and as a "warmonger' bent on some sort of nuclear showdown. Going into the 1984 election, Reagan could play to his strengths, and the affable "great communicator" hit his stride,

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[171] Meyer, 222.

[172] Fitzgerald, 180, 200, 203.

[173] *Ibid.*, 199.

proclaiming an upbeat patriotic message that sounded hollow to some during hard times but fit the mood of an economic recovery well.

Finally, Walter Mondale, the Democrat's standard bearer, failed to catch fire with the American public and especially the freeze movement, which regarded the Minnesotan with ambivalence. Mondale had supported the arms buildup of the late Carter years and continued to embrace deployment of the Euromissiles. He called for a 5% military budget increase over inflation compared to 8% by Reagan, and a quarantine of revolutionary Nicaragua, which further alienated the left.

Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis had endorsed Mondale early in the primaries, and sought to energize Mondale's campaign at a Boston Freeze Voter rally in October. Dukakis hoped his own strong freeze credentials would help legitimize Mondale for skeptical freeze advocates. Dukakis aid Mardee Xifaras sent the governor a memo on his upcoming speech that stated, "I strongly urge you to send a very pointed, no nonsense message about what the American people are thinking on the war and peace issues, as contrasted with what the Reagan Republicans are saying and doing."[174] Freeze Voter '84 highlighted the presence of Dukakis at the rally in fliers that read, "Join Freeze Voter '84, Governor Dukakis, and other politicians who support the Freeze, Saturday, October 20th for a Major Political Rally and Massive Literature Distribution Action."[175] At the October 20 rally, which took place at Faneuil Hall, Dukakis appeared with Lieutenant Governor John Kerry, liberal congressmen Barney Frank, Gerry Studds, and

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[174] MarDee Xifaras to Michael S. Dukakis, Re: "Participation in Freeze Voter '84 Rally at Faneuil Hall", October 19, 1984. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign papers. Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 283.

[175] Freeze Voter '84 Flier, October 1984. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, MS 32, Box 5, Folder 71.

Ed Markey, as well as Democratic challenger to Silvio Conte, Mary Wentworth. Dukakis lashed out at the Reagan administration, accusing it of "substituting tough talk for courageous action and for refusing to wake us from the nightmare of nuclear destruction." Invoking the memory of John Kennedy, Dukakis denounced the Reagan administration's lack of progress toward arms control and its SDI program:

> ... A little over twenty years ago this month, during one of the most frightening periods of our recent history, President Kennedy got on the hotline to Moscow and ended the Cuban Missile Crisis. The current administration doesn't even know the phone number...[the] failure to meet, to negotiate, to take even the smallest steps to control these deadly weapons threatens to rob us and our children of our future... And most disturbing of all, this administration is not content with the tools of destruction here on earth but now wants to circle the heavens with atomic death... In their platform, the Republicans talk of surviving a nuclear war.[176]

Despite the strong support for the freeze movement in the Bay State, Dukakis' efforts failed to deliver even Massachusetts for Mondale. In November, Reagan was re-elected with 59% of the national vote, with Mondale winning only the District of Columbia and his home state.[177]

In late 1984, the freeze movement tried one last ditch effort to get Congress to impose a freeze by using the power of the purse. Once again, Kennedy, Hatfield and Markey teamed up to sponsor, with Jim Leach (R-IA), the "Arms Race Moratorium Act", which called for an end of testing on warheads, long range missiles and anti-satellite missiles.[178] Called the "Quick Freeze", the bill would have slowed but not stopped the arms race. Kehler and the NWFC enthusiastically embraced the proposal,

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[176] "Dukakis Assails Reagan Administration Arms Control Policy", Michael Dukakis Press Release, October 20, 1984. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 283.

[177] Meyer, 250.

[178] Traprock Report, Vol. IV, #3, May 1984 Traprock Peace Center Records.

which attracted 120 co-sponsors in the House and seven in the Senate. The entire Massachusetts delegation was on board.[179] The bill never made much headway.[180]

Henceforth, opponents of the arms race drifted off to other movements. Many focused on opposing SDI, in which they were soon joined by most of the Massachusetts delegation, including Silvio Conte. Others moved into the growing Central American Solidarity Movement and the anti-apartheid movement.

The Impact of the Freeze Movement

David Meyer argues that the freeze movement was "notable for its failures".[181] He especially blames the movement's shift toward political lobbying and professionalization at the expense of the grassroots and believes the movement became too dependent on the Kennedy and Markey staff people. Meyer believes this trend resulted in the movement's "demobilization" and "depoliticization."[182] To some extent, Meyer is correct, and here the experience resembled that of the Clamshell Alliance in 1978, when it opted for a legal energy fair over another direct action, demoralizing much of its more committed base. Still, Meyer acknowledges that the movement shifted the rhetoric in the nation and might have prepared the ground for the negotiations with Mikhail Gorbachev in the Reagan administration's second term. Writes Meyer, "The movement can also be seen as a political triumph. The freeze effectively forced an

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[179] Traprock Report, Vol. IV, #2, March 1984. Traprock Peace Center Records.

[180] Waller 292-3.

[181] Meyer, 271.

[182] *Ibid.*, 255-6.

extremely popular president to return to long-established bipartisan policies he had consistently eschewed and had vigorously criticized."[183]

Franees Fitzgerald believes the freeze movement had a major impact on the trajeetory of the Reagan administration's nuclear weapons policies, attributing to the movement the mellower, more reassuring tone coming out of the White House beginning in 1983. The freeze movement and the West European peace movement constituted one of the largest mass movements ever to grow simultaneously on both sides of the Atlantie. Each moved far deeper into the mainstream of their respective countries' established politics than most movements ever do. They had shifted the terms of the debate and had made it more elear than ever that populations on both sides of the Atlantic were tiring of the eold war and did not envision it ending in a vietory scenario for one side or the other, as did many of the "war winner" strategists who were aseendant in the early Reagan years. Although the freeze movement was unable to stop appropriations for a single weapons system in the Reagan administration budget, the movement's long-term impaet prepared the ground for the coming of Gorbachev, and the revival of a new *détente* that ultimately led to the negotiated end of the cold war.

Yet, despite the ease that one ean make for the freeze movement changing the tone and trajeetory of the Reagan administration's nuclear weapons poliey, the fact remained that the freeze movement's vietories remained either symbolie or indireet. Aceording to Randy Kehler, the freeze movement suffered from having "support a mile wide and an ineh deep".[184] For Kehler, the shift of focus to Washington, D.C. was

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[183] *Ibid., 272.*

[184] Telephone interview with Randy Kehler, May 5, 2003.

premature and fatal. Kehler stated, "[the] demise of the national freeze [eame when the movement] ran out of things people could do in their local communities... When the foeus moved to Washington it was harder for people to plug in where they are."[185] For Kehler, the major lessons of the freeze movement were "don't go to Washington too soon"; "don't believe your own press"; "have things to do in people's own communities"; and "you ean't diversify a movement once it's going [if it isn't] multiracial from the beginning." The long-term lesson that Kehler argued was most important was the power of money in Congress. Kehler recalled that the freeze "underestimated the elout of the nuelear weapons industry."[186]

Between 1980 and 1983 the freeze grew into one of the largest peaee movements in U.S. history. The movement had penetrated the mainstream press and media and beeame the largest eountervailing voiee to the eold war rhetorie of Ronald Reagan. In the fall of 1983, international events such as the downing of KAL 007 and the U.S. invasion of Grenada strengthened Reagan's eold war positions. The economic recovery of late 1983 helped boost Reagan's popularity and further contributed to the freeze movement's decline. Yet, as freeze aetivists sought to stop nuclear war, a war of another kind beekoned eloser to home. Throughout the early Reagan years, a growing movement emerged in opposition to the adminstration's intervention in Central America, which many Americans feared was leading the country down the path of another Vietnam. The Central American "soldiarity" movement grew in the shadow of the freeze then exploded in mid-decade. The movement won strong support in Congress, which moved

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[185] *Ibid.*

[186] *Ibid.* Based on their experience with the power of the nuclear weapons industry, many freeze activists later led the movement for campaign finance reform.

to impose limits on the adminstration's intervention against the leftist government in Nicaragua. Efforts by members of the Reagan administration to circumvent congressional restrictions would give rise to the series of illegal activities that collectively came to be known as the "Iran-Contra scandal."

CHAPTER V

THE CENTRAL AMERICAN SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT IN MASSACHUSETTS, 1980-1990

Introduction: 1980 -- Four Church Women, an Archbishop and an Ambassador

On December 2, 1980, Sisters Ita Ford and Maura Clarke of the Maryknoll Order prepared to take a flight from Managua, Nicaragua to San Salvador, the capital of El Salvador and from there to return to the small northwestern town of Chalatenango, where for most of the last year they had worked distributing food and clothing to impoverished refugees fleeing the war zone that engulfed ever larger sections of rural El Salvador.[1] In 1979, a reform *junta* had come to power in El Salvador, hoping to address that nation's staggering poverty and inequality, where for decades a small oligarchy and brutal military oversaw a society in which 1.9% of the people owned 57% of the land.[2] Within months, however, most left-leaning members of the *junta* quit in protest over the military's absolute refusal to countenance any land reform or democratic change. As popular protest continued to sweep El Salvador, the military intensified its campaign of repression and in 1980, a divided Marxist guerrilla movement unified in the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN).[3] The guerrillas took their name from a leftist leader of a 1932 peasant uprising during which 10,000-30,000 peasants were killed by

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[1] New York Times, December 7, 1980, 1.

[2] Marvin E. Gettleman, El Salvador: Central America in the New Cold War (New York: Grove Press, 1981); William M. LeoGrande, Our Own Backyard: The United States and Central America, 1977-1992 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 34.

[3] LeoGrande, 47-48.

the Salvadoran military in what came to be known as *"la Matanza"* ("the Massacre").[4] Just six days before Sisters Ford and Clarke returned to El Salvador, six civilian politicians from the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR), an opposition political group sympathetic to the FMLN, were murdered by right-wing "death squads" aligned with the Salvadoran military and ruling oligarchy.[5] According to *The New York Times*, over 8,000 Salvadorans had been killed in political violence over the past year, predominantly by the rightist government's National Guard, Army and infamous Treasury Police.[6]

The atmosphere was quite different in Managua, where Sisters Ita and Maura had just spent several days at a conference of the Maryknoll order. A little over a year earlier, a guerrilla army known as the Sandinistas coordinated a final military offensive throughout Nicaragua which toppled that country's long-time dictator, Anastosio Somoza and his National Guard. The Sandinistas had taken their name from the populist leader Augusto Cesar Sandino who had led a peasant army in opposition to occupying United States Marines from 1926 until 1933, when he was murdered by the U.S.-installed dictator. By 1979, the Somoza family had not only ruled Nicaragua for decades, but also owned much of that nation's land and resources.[7] As Sisters Ita and Maura traveled through Managua, much of the city lay in ruins, not only from the civil war

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[4] Thomas P. Anderson, *Matanza*: El Salvador's Communist Revolt of 1932 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971).

[5] LeoGrande, 59-60.

[6] New York Times, December 7, 1980, 9.

[7] LeoGrande, 18-27; Bernard Dietrich, Somoza and the Legacy of U.S. Involvement in Central America (New York: Dutton, 1981).

which brought the Sandinistas to power and claimed the lives of over 50,000 Nicaraguans, but from the devastating earthquake which struck the city in 1972.[8]

Nevertheless, in December 1980 Nicaragua was for many, imbued with a festive air of liberation after long years of oppression. Sister Maura Clarke was especially enthusiastic about the prospects for the Sandinista revolution. Before coming to El Salvador, the Bronx, N.Y. native had worked for seventeen years among Nicaragua's poor.[9] Sister Maura's years in Nicaragua coincided with the spread of Liberation Theology throughout Latin America. Growing out of Vatican II's call on the church to do more to alleviate the suffering of the poor and the impact of the 1959 Cuban Revolution on Latin America, Liberation Theology was an amalgam of the Christian Gospel and Marxist ideology. The previous summer, Sister Maura told a Church magazine, "I believe very much in non-violence but also we can never judge anyone who has to resort to violence, as in Nicaragua, because of the institutional injustice and violence present in the country for years and years."[10]

Sister Maura Clarke was not alone in her sentiments. The Maryknoll Order was a liberal order in which nuns were not required to wear veils and which, in the words of Sisters Maura and Ita's superior, Sister Peg Merker, had a mission "to go to other countries to work for the poor and the oppressed and for the promotion of justice." Sister Ita left her Brooklyn, N.Y. neighborhood to join the order in 1971 and was sent to Chile, where in 1973 she witnessed first-hand the U.S.-sponsored overthrow of democratically-

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[8] *Ibid.*; New York Times, December 7, 1980, 1 and 9.

[9] *Ibid.*, 9; Gettleman, 140.

[10] New York Times, December 9, 1980, 9.

elected Marxist President, Salvador Allende. She, like Sister Maura, had begun work in El Salvador in early 1980.[11] On the day Sister Ita arrived in El Salvador, a death squad aligned with right-wing ARENA party leader, Roberto D'Aubuisson, assassinated the Archbishop of San Salvador Oscar Arnulfo Romero. The previous February, the Archbishop had written a personal letter to United States President Jimmy Carter imploring him to cut all U.S. military aid to El Salvador:

> I ask that, if you truly want to defend human rights, you: Prohibit military aid to the Salvadoran government: Guarantee that your government not intervene, directly or indirectly, with military, economic or diplomatic pressure in determining the destiny of the Salvadoran people… I hope that your religious sentiments and your sensitivity to the defense of human rights will move you to accept my plea avoiding, with such acceptance, any greater, any greater bloodshed in this suffering country.[12]

The day before the Archbishop's assassination and Sister Ita's arrival in El Salvador, Archbishop Romero made an impassioned plea to the soldiers of the Salvadoran military to stop that nation's bloodshed:

> Brothers, you came from our own people. You are killing your own brothers. Any human order to kill must be subordinate to the law of God, which says, "Thou Shalt Not Kill". No soldier is obliged to obey an order contrary to the law of God. No one has to obey an immoral law. It is high time you obeyed your consciences rather than sinful orders. The church cannot remain silent before such an abomination… In the name of God, in the name of this suffering people whose cry rises to heaven more loudly each day, I implore you, I beg you, I order you: Stop the repression.[13]

As Sisters Ita and Maura returned to El Salvador on December 2, news of the most recent assassinations a week earlier of six opposition leaders was the talk of the

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[11] *Ibid.*

[12] Gettleman, 135-6.

[13] Ibid. Quoted in full on "Romero", http:www.icomm.ca/carecen/page25.html. Retrieved November 25, 2002.

eapital. Sister Dorothy Kazel, a Cleveland, Ohio native and member of the Ursuline Order, met the Sisters at the San Salvador airport along with Jean Donovan, a Catholic lay worker from Westport, Connectieut. Together, the four ehurchwomen left the capital in a Toyota van, heading north to return to their mission in Chalatenango. A week earlier, while they were in Nicaragua, several messages had been left for the nuns on the Chalatenango parish door. One read, "Go to Cuba to finish your Communist work" and another proelaimed, "In this house are Communists. Everyone who enters here will die. Try and see."[14]

A day later, on Deeember 3, the charred remains of the Toyota van was discovered some twenty-five miles north of the capital. The van was connected to the ehurehwomen by the engine's serial number. The next day, twenty miles from where the van had been deposited and burned, the bodies of Sisters Ita Ford, Maura Clarke, Dorothy Kazel and lay worker Jean Donovan were found by poor local farmers in a shallow two-foot grave, their elothes torn and their bodies badly mutilated. Autopsies later revealed the women had been raped, then shot in the skulls exeeution style.[15]

On Deeember 4, U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White learned of the news and departed north to colleet the bodies of the murdered U.S. citizens. The Ambassador had no doubt this was the work of the Salvadoran military, and that no low-level offieer would carry out sueh exeeutions without orders from higher up. A lifelong professional diplomat, Robert White had been appointed to El Salvador by President Carter and took seriously the president's injunction to make human rights a centerpieee

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[14] New York Times, December 7, 1980, 1; Gettleman, 140; LeoGrande, 60-1.

[15] *Ibid.*

of U.S. policy in the region. After the 1979 *Sandinista* revolution in Nicaragua, however, Central America increasingly became caught up in the renewed Cold War marked by the decline of *détente,* failure of SALT II, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and a resurgent Republican Right in the United States. As the deaths from right-wing violence mounted in 1980, the Carter administration refused to heed Archbishop Romero's plea to cut recently renewed military aid to El Salvador. Now, in response to the murder of four U.S. citizens, the Carter administration suspended $25 million of military and economic aid to El Salvador. Fearing an FMLN victory, however, the Administration reinstated some aid a week later, and all of it within a month.[16]

Ambassador White, an uncommonly decent man with a genuine concern for the welfare of the people of El Salvador, knew the hopes of the early Carter years to promote human rights throughout the region were gone. The previous month, the people of the United States had elected a man determined to make Central America the frontline in a resurgent global crusade to contain Communism. Fearing Nicaragua and El Salvador could become Soviet outposts in the western hemisphere, Ronald Reagan vowed to halt the spread of Marxist revolution in Central America by any means necessary. Rightist forces in Central America viewed the incoming administration, with its numerous critics of the Carter human rights policy, as saviors. The incoming Reagan administration promised a massive reshuffling of State Department personnel to reflect the new policy,

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[16] LeoGrande, 16-17, 43-6. Carter's new policy in Central America was further underscored in 1977 when the new president declared, "Being confident of our future, we are now free of that inordinate fear of Communism which once led us to embrace any dictator who joined us in that fear." Quoted in Gettleman; On the Carter human rights policy, besides LeoGrande's excellent overview, see Richard Thornton, The Carter Years: Toward a New Global Order (New York: Paragon House, 1991); Joshua Muravchic, The Uncertain Trumpet: Jimmy Carter and the Dilemmas of Human Rights Policy (Lanham, Maryland: Hamilton Press, 1986); and Hamilton Jordon, Crisis: The Last Year of the Carter Presidency (New York: Putnam, 1982).

and declared that the first to go would be Robert White, who was indeed fired unceremoniously.[17]

Alongside the renewed arms race, the new administration's policies in Central America soon became a lightening rod for radical activism and liberal challenges to the Reagan administration. Throughout the 1980s, the unpunished murders and cherished memories of Jean Donovan and Sisters Ita Ford, Maura Clarke and Dorothy Kazel would hang like a pall over the debate on Ronald Reagan's policies in Central America. Responding to a 1993 report by the United Nations Truth Commission on El Salvador that concluded the order for the churchwomen's executions came from high up the military chain of command, the U. S. State Department issued a statement which read in part: "This particular act of barbarism did more to inflame the debate over El Salvador in the United States than any other single incident."[18]

A New Administration and a New Movement

During 1981, as part of its across the board arms build up and more confrontational policy toward the Soviet Union, the new Reagan administration sought to recast the conflicts in Central America in terms of the global cold war. Although the Carter administration, especially in its later years, increasingly factored cold war concerns into its Central American policy, the Democratic administration continued to see the region's problems as largely outgrowths of local causes such as endemic poverty, stark class inequality, a legacy of military government and ongoing human rights

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[17] *Ibid.* 58, 76, 82.

[18] New York Times April 3, 1998.

violations (what conservatives derided as "regionalitis".) The new Reagan administration, while occasionally acknowledging such forces, sought to de-emphasize them and portrayed the region's problems as predominantly the result of Soviet and Cuban outside agitation.[19] Referring to El Salvador (and with the Vietnam war clearly in mind), the administration's hawkish Secretary of State, Alexander Haig privately exhorted Reagan, "Mr. President, you can win this one."[20]

Reagan quickly worked to triple U.S. aid to El Salvador and to increase the numbers of U.S. military advisors in the country to fifty-two. The administration's strategy was to contain leftist rebels in El Salvador through military victory by the government's armed forces, while working to bolster the Salvadoran center, especially *junta* president Jose Napolean Duarte's Christian Democrats, and gradually to reduce the number of death squad killings, hold elections in two years time and implement a modest land reform program.[21]

If the administration's policy was containment in El Salvador, then overtime it came to be rollback in Nicaragua. After the 1979 Sandinista revolution, the Carter administration hoped to move the new revolutionary government in the direction of multi-party democracy and a market economy by reinstating, and even increasing aid, which had been cut in the last months of the Somoza regime, but earmarking large

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[19] LeoGrande, 52-71; See also, Jeff McMahan, Reagan and the World: Imperial Policy in the Cold War (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1985); Thomas Walker, editor, Reagan versus the Sandinistas: The Undeclared War on Nicaragua (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987).

[20] Alexander Haig, Caveat: Realism, Reagan and Foreign Policy (New York: MacMillan, 1981).

[21] Leogrande details the debate in the early Reagan administration between those who wished to completely disregard human rights concerns and those, like Undersecretary of State Thomas Enders who pushed to support Duarte and the Christian Democrats against a right-wing military *coup* and to make at least nominal genuflections in the direction of human rights. LeoGrande, 72-103.

segments of that aid toward the private sector. Within a year, the Reagan administration cut U.S. aid to Nicaragua. Although the Reagan administration's emphasis early on would be on El Salvador, where an FMLN victory was still a possibility, as the civil war in El Salvador settled into a bloody and protracted stalemate in 1982, the administration shifted its focus toward destabilizing the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, which it accused of arming the Salvadoran rebels and seeking to export revolution throughout Central America. The administration would do this by covertly arming and training disaffected Nicaraguans in neighboring Honduras and destabilizing Nicaragua through a proxy war and covert operations carried out by C.I.A. The anti-Sandinista counterrevolutionaries, later known as the Contras, grew out of the remnants of Somoza's National Guard, 800 of whom were secretly flown out of the country to Honduras by the Carter administration with the fall of the Somoza regime in 1979.[22]

The sharp shift in U.S. policy in Central America concerned many liberals who were outraged that the administration seemed to be so unconditionally supporting the Salvadoran *junta*, which seemed incapable or unwilling to reign in its armed forces and paramilitary death squads, whose victims averaged over 700 per month throughout 1981 and 1982.[23] The impact was even more electrifying on the radical left. Radical interest in Latin America traced back as far as the late 1950s, when Fidel Castro and his band of guerrillas captured the imaginations of much of the U.S. left and, for a time, even many mainstream liberals. Over the next decade, as Che Guevara became an icon of the campus-based New Left, a number of young leftists, carrying on a tradition that went

[22] LeoGrande, 104-124; Walker, ed. ; Robert Kagan, A Twilight Struggle: American Power and Nicaragua, 1977-1990, (New York: Free Press, 1996).

[23] LeoGrande, 152-8.

back to the Lincoln Brigades during the 1930s Spanish Civil War, sought to aid the new revolutionary government of Cuba by traveling to the island nation to help with harvests as *Brigadistas* in the internationalist *Venceramos* Brigades. By the 1970s, Cuba's hold on the imaginations of the U.S. left had begun to fade; yet radical interest in Latin America continued, primarily through the influence of Liberation Theology.[24]

The 1979 Sandinista revolution captivated the North American left. The Sandinistas recaptured some of the romantic aura of the early Cuban revolution, yet seemed to differ in important ways from Communist-bloc nations and their rigid ideologies and bureaucratic governments. The revolutionary movement in Nicaragua seemed humanized by the influence of Liberation Theology, witnessed by the absence of a bloodbath after the rise to power and the new regime's quick abolition of the death penalty and its lenient treatment of former Guardsmen. The new Sandinista government included poets such as renowned author Ernesto Cardenal, and unlike Cuba, which persecuted the Catholic Church indiscriminately as a bastion of reaction, the Sandinista government included two priests in its nine-member Directorate. The Nicaraguan revolution could be many things to many people. To more radical leftists who felt disaffected by the less militant politics of the antinuclear energy or freeze movements, solidarity with the Sandinista revolution allowed them to identify with an anti-imperialist, Marxist influenced movement. For those of a countercultural orientation, the agrarian nature of the revolution held much appeal (many such internationalists who trekked to Nicaragua during the 1980s earned the moniker, "Sandalistas".). For religious activists, the revolution held the promise of putting Liberation Theology's vision of a

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[24] Gettleman.

radical social gospel into practice.[25] Even many liberals saw the Sandinistas as more peasant populists than hardened Communists. In the wake of the 1979 revolution, Iowa Congressman Tom Harkin proclaimed enthusiastically, "*Yo soy Sandinista!*" [26]

Unlike the movements against nuclear power and the arms race, in which New England and especially Massachusetts were at the forefront, the Central American Solidarity Movement of the 1980s took root first on the west coast, especially the San Francisco Bay area. Many of the U.S. national solidarity groups, such as the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), the National Network in Solidarity with the Nicaraguan People (NNSNP) and the Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA) grew fastest on the west coast, an area with strong demographic and cultural ties to Latin America as well as a firmly-established political left.[27]

The early solidarity movement was especially attractive to young, more militant leftists. This often led to tensions with older activists and peace groups. According to historian and activist Van Gosse, "In those years, CISPES activists acquired a reputation as insistent [red] flag waving partisans of the FMLN."[28] Thus, although a 1981 CISPES rally in Washington, D.C. drew 100,000 marchers, the CISPES' sponsored rally the following year attracted only 60,000 due to defections by more mainline peace groups. Many spoke in these divisive early years of an "anti-intervention movement" *versus* a

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[25] Walker; Kagan.

[26] Quoted in Van Gosse, "'The North American Front': Central American Solidarity in the Reagan Era" in Mike Davis and Michael Sprinker, Reshaping the U.S. Left: Popular Struggles in the 1980s (London, New York: Verso, 1988), 11-49.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] *Ibid.*, 25.

"solidarity" movement. Whereas the former relegated itself to opposing U.S. intervention on the grounds of self-determination, peace and human rights, the latter openly and enthusiastically proclaimed its support for the Sandinistas, FMLN and other revolutionary movements in the region. According to Gosse, "the difference was mutual stylistic discomfort. Solidarity activists were committed to a posture of enthusiastic and continual militance on behalf of an anti-imperial revolution. Anti-intervention workers... favored persuasion over confrontation and a carefully 'American' humanitarian approach."[29] Gosse, however, describes this as a "sterile division" because "as the Right had charged all along... the results for Central America are likely to be the same: hindering intervention means 'One, two, many' popular victories in the long run."[30] As the decade progressed, however, the two strands became part of a larger movement, in which the differences at times were difficult to distinguish. (Hereinafter, the movement will be referred to as the "Central American Solidarity Movement".)

Early Solidarity Activism in Massachusetts

Although Massachusetts would emerge as a stronghold of the Central American solidarity movement, early on the issue of Central America was eclipsed by the phenomenal growth of the freeze movement in the Bay State. Despite this overshadowing presence, however, awareness of the issues confronting the people of Central America grew steadily through activist letters-to-the-editor, prayer vigils, speaking tours and sporadic rallies against U.S. intervention in the region. Much of the

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[29] *Ibid.*, 15.

[30] *Ibid.*, 15.

early movement was educational in nature. Area churches, including Congregationalists, Unitarians and the AFSC, were especially active in the nascent campaign to educate Massachusetts residents on the issues of Central America. Often, churches collaborated, as was the case in western Massachusetts with an "Ecumenical Memorial Service for Victims of Political Oppression" held at St. Brigids Catholic Church on January 11, 1981, sponsored by the Amherst Clergy Association, the AFSC, and the Western Massachusetts Latin American Solidarity Committee. Guests from El Salvador in attendance described to the assembled group the horrors occurring in their native land. Patricia Sellars, a Philadelphia AFSC member just returned from El Salvador asked, "What can we as North Americans do? Do what you can…stop dehumanizing people, start thinking of human rights as your rights."[31]

The more militant nature of solidarity activism helped it gain greater traction at college and university campuses, where alongside the anti-apartheid movement that swelled in the latter half of the decade, it developed a far stronger student base than the freeze movement. Just three months into the new Reagan administration, over 1,500 activists rallied against Reagan's Central American policies at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Sponsored by a coalition of twenty-three student and community groups, an eclectic mix of church-based and student-based activists assembled at the University of Massachusetts Student Union, then marched through the downtown area to the Amherst Commons where speakers denounced the administration's policies, with some focusing more on human rights violations in Central

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[31] Daily Hampshire Gazette, January 16, 1981; Valley Advocate, January 19, 1981.

America and others more ardently proclaiming revolutionary solidarity with the FMLN, the Sandinistas and a few even expressing support for Cuba.[32]

Typical of the community-based rallies against U.S. intervention was a protest at Northampton's Pulaski Park on April 26, 1981, which also attracted an estimated 1,500 protestors. The rally's featured speakers included Maryknoll Sister Mario Russo, David Cohen of the United Electrical Workers (UE) Holyoke Local 264, and a representative of El Salvador's Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) appearing under the *alias* of "Duran". Cohen sought to connect U.S. policy in Central America with U.S. domestic issues, asserting that many in the U.S. labor movement opposed Reagan's policies "since El Salvador is a haven for runaway factories and multinational corporations. Although the military government declares unions illegal, every major union hall has been bombed or burned... the only reason the U.S. government hasn't sent troops into El Salvador is because of demonstrations like this..."[33] As the rag-tag band of activists listened, large green military transport planes lumbered overhead across the gray sky bound for nearby Westover Airforce Base, symbolizing for many the omnipresent fear of another Vietnam being played out in Central America.[34]

After Cohen, "Duran" of the FDR spoke to the crowd emphasizing the indigenous sources of El Salvador's revolutionary movement:

> The press says the conflict in El Salvador is the result of external communist powers rather than internal conditions of poverty and oppression – the Salvadoran people are a peace loving people, our struggle for freedom from Duarte's oppression has nothing to do with

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[32] The Morning Union, March 3, 1981.

[33] Daily Hampshire Gazette, April 27, 1981.

[34] *Ibid.*

> Cuba or Russia nor can our freedom be determined by U.S. aid to the *junta* who support a system where 2% of the people own 60% of the land while 65% are landless.[35]

Concluding his impassioned remarks, "Duran" raised a clenched fist and declared to the crowd, "We have learned it is better to die fighting than to live on our knees!"[36]

Alongside rallies, Massachusetts activists threw themselves into the national material aid campaigns on behalf of war victims in El Salvador. During the decade, Medical Aid for El Salvador (MAES) raised $700,000 for medical supplies; New El Salvador Today (NEST) raised $157,000 in general aid; and CISPES raised $500,000.[37] The material aid campaign was highly controversial and subject to frequent red baiting since much of the aid was distributed in war zones behind FMLN "zones of control". Celebrities such as actors Mike Farrell of "M.A.S.H." and Ed Asner of the popular "Lou Grant Show" played prominent public roles in these national campaigns.[38] In Western Massachusetts, groups such as the AFSC-sponsored Central American Working Group (CAWG), an all-women's organization, worked to bring the successful localist strategy of the freeze and antinuclear energy campaigns to Central American solidarity activism. The CAWG pursued a multi-generational, highly interpersonal solidarity campaign in an effort to bring the movement into traditionally non-activist sections of the community. The group often set up stands in public places and went door to door in neighborhoods soliciting aid for Central American war victims. During these community outreach

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[35] *Ibid.*

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] Barton Meyers and Jean Weissman, "The Solidarity Movement in the U.S." in Gettleman, ed. , 379-91; See also, Van Gosse, "'The North American Front': Central American Solidarity in the Reagan Era," in Davis and Sprinker, eds.

[38] *Ibid.*

campaigns, and at more traditional rallies, the women of the CAWG would circulate Polaroid photos of families from El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala, to personalize the issues of war and poverty in a way they felt slick newspaper photographs could not. The goal of such campaigns was not only to raise money for victims of war and poverty in Central America but to forge a sense of personal connection between North Americans and their neighbors to the south, much as the freeze movement sought to make the issues of nuclear war less abstract and more personal.[39]

The Central American solidarity campaign in Massachusetts began to pick up steam in 1983. This was due, first, to the waning of the freeze movement that had pulled so much of the Bay State's activist energy into its vortex; and secondly, due to the Reagan administration's rapidly escalating proxy war against the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. Throughout 1982, news reports of a covert, C.I.A.-directed military campaign by Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries against the leftist government in Managua surfaced with increasing frequency. By 1983, the Reagan administration's denials gave way to confirmation of U.S. support for the rebel forces, but with the limited aim, the administration contended, of interdicting Sandinista weapons smuggling to the FMLN in neighboring El Salvador. Thus, although the Reagan administration sought to package its aid to the Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries as defensive in nature and with limited objectives, to many liberals and radicals the covert aid campaign signaled a dramatic escalation in the administration's efforts to destabilize and ultimately overthrow the revolutionary government in Nicaragua.[40]

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[39] Interview with Lois Ahrens, December 8, 1996.

[40] New York Times, April 15, 1983; LeoGrande, 89, 114-15, 144-5.

The shift in focus in Massachusetts was signaled in the summer of 1983 when fifteen Massachusetts activists announced they would be among the first contingent of North Americans to travel to the Nicaraguan war zone as part of Witness for Peace, a national faith-based campaign to raise awareness of the proxy war and seek to stop it with their presence. The Massachusetts delegation on the first Witness for Peace delegation was headed by Boston Congregationalist Minister Frank Dorman and included in its ranks the ubiquitous Frances Crowe, whose focus now began to shift from disarmament to Central American solidarity activism. Crowe, who'd just played the leading role in forming the Northampton-based Central American Working Group, and only months earlier had been arrested in Rhode Island for painting "Thou Shalt Not Kill" on a nuclear submarine, now prepared to enter the remote areas of the war-torn Nicaraguan-Honduran border. Before departing, Crowe told a reporter for The Boston Globe, "What we will be doing is putting non-violence to work by putting our bodies in front of violence."[41]

The Witness for Peace mission gained a good deal of national publicity and was followed by many more Witness for Peace missions to the war zone involving hundreds of North Americans. Upon returning from the war-ravaged Honduran-Nicaraguan border, Ruth Harkins of the Western Massachusetts AFSC expressed her opposition to U.S. government policies in terms of the "Spirit of 1776": "This is not our battle. I feel that Nicaraguans have accomplished a revolution, just as we did 200 years ago, and they

[41] Boston Globe, December 9, 1983; Interview with Frances Crowe, December 3, 1996.

are entitled to the fruits of that revolution. They claim a right to self-determination which we are not respecting."[42]

By 1985, the Reagan administration's proxy war became increasingly destructive and destabilizing as the Sandinista government was forced to divert ever greater resources from popular social programs, earmarking over 50% of its budget to its war with the ever-expanding "Contras" (as the U.S.-backed Nicaraguan rebels were now called.)[43] Reagan declared the Contras to be "the moral equivalent of our founding fathers". As the U.S. proxy war continued in the mid-1980s, the administration's policies became increasingly mired in controversy. In 1984, it was revealed that the C.I.A. had blown up oil tanks in Corinto, Nicaragua and mined the nation's major harbor, resulting in a rare adverse ruling against the United States by the World Court in the Hague (which the administration declared null.)[44]

The Solidarity Movement and Governor Michael S. Dukakis

Just like the nuclear weapons freeze movement, the solidarity movement in Massachusetts sought to build bridges to Governor Michael Dukakis. The governor was again receptive. Dukakis spoke Spanish and had attended the University of San Marcos in Peru in 1954 when the C.I.A. orchestrated the overthrow of the democratically elected president of Guatemala, Jacobo Arbenz. Ever since, Dukakis had remained critical of the

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[42] Daily Hampshire Gazette, November 26, 1983.

[43] Walker, ed.; also, Kagan.

[44] *Ibid.* New York Times, April 12, 1984.

U.S. role in Latin America. In 1983, Dukakis responded to one solidarity activist, writing:

> Both as an individual and as a Governor of the Commonwealth, I have often expressed my disagreement with the policies of President Reagan in South America generally and in El Salvador and Nicaragua particularly. Once again, I see our nation expending large amounts of money for overt and covert military aid under the general rubric of protecting us against Communism. Once again, I see those who question the rationale and wisdom of such policies attacked as either naïve or unpatriotic. I am most concerned with the obvious parallels to our unfortunate and costly involvement in Southeast Asia.[45]

Early in Dukakis's term, the Boston Coordinating Council on Central America contacted the governor in the hope that he would declare September 15, 1983 a "Day for Peace with Justice in Central America". The Boston Coordinating Council worked to direct cooperative projects by several groups active in solidarity activism such as the AFSC, Mobilization for Survival, Catholic Connection, the Central American Solidarity Association (CASA), the Maryknoll Center for Justice and Peace Concerns, the New England Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), OXFAM America and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. Dan Petegorsky of Boston's Mobilization for Survival wrote Dukakis, "September 15, the date on which Central American peoples traditionally celebrate their independence from Spain, has been designated as a national day of action for peace in Nicaragua and Central America... We are grateful for the interest that you have shown on Central American issues in the past, and hope that you will join with us and with people across the state and the country on September 15 in voicing our concerns over the direction of the Reagan administration's

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[45] Michael S. Dukakis to Rebecca Cunningham, December 12, 1983. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, University Libraries, Archives and Special Collections Department, Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts, Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 282 (hereinafter cited as Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers).

policies."[46] Dukakis responded by issuing what would be the first of many proclamations sought by Massachusetts solidarity activists. Noting, "The policies of the Reagan administration, contrary to the expressed opinions of the people of Massachusetts, are serving to increase the likelihood of war," the governor proclaimed September 15 a "Day for Peace and Justice in Central America." He urged citizens to "express their concern over the grave situation in whatever ways they feel are appropriate."[47]

In 1984, Dukakis responded to solidarity activists by again proclaiming September 15 a "Day for Peace and Justice" in Central America, and by endorsing the 1984 East-Coast speaking tour of Marta Alicia Rivera, a representative of the National Association of Salvadoran Educators (ANDES), who helped initiate a fifty-eight day general strike in 1968, was kidnapped and tortured by the Salvadoran National Guard in 1979 and subsequently fled the country. The Massachusetts Teachers Association asked Dukakis to endorse her tour, which he did despite charges from the Reagan administration that Rivera and ANDES sympathized with the Salvadoran guerrillas.[48]

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[46] Dan Petegorsky to Michael S. Dukakis, September 8, 1983. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 282.

[47] "A Proclamation by His Excellency Michael S. Dukakis, Governor", 1983. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 282 and Box 4, Folder 229.

[48] "The Working People of Central America: Maria Alicia Rivera", undated newspaper article, *circa* 1984. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 4, Folder 229. "Letter of Endorsement", Michael S. Dukakis, March 28, 1984. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 4, Folder 229. While practicing for charges expected from the Bush campaign in 1988, Dukakis's staff put together practice charges for the governor to respond to. In one, the charge read: "MSD endorsed with a signed proclamation the 1984 U.S. tour by Marta Alicia Rivera, a leading member of a Salvadoran labor organization. She had been kidnapped and tortured by the Salvadoran military, and she was touring the U.S. speaking about it. The Massachusetts Association of Teachers asked MSD to back [the] tour. Judging from the group's literature and its activities inside El Salvador, it's almost certainly tied to the guerrilllas. The connection is immediately recognizable from the literature. However, there's never any proof of these ties." Dukakis response was to affirm his confidence in the Massachusetts Teachers Association and denounce the Reagan-Bush administration for illegally giving $200,000 to "a drug-smuggling Panamania dictator", Manuel Noriega. "Central American Groups", *circa* summer 1988. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 4, Folder 229.

Dukakis also endorsed a referendum question appearing in thirty-nine of the state's representative districts, calling on the President and Congress to cut all military aid to Central America and withdraw all military advisors from the region. The Central American Referendum Campaign, another statewide coalition of solidarity groups sought to imitate the success of the freeze movement's referenda campaigns and featured Dukakis's endorsement prominently in the campaign. One flier had emblazoned across the top, "Remember Vietnam? Vote 'Yes' for Peace in Central America on November 6". On the bottom was a photo of Dominic Bozzotto, a Massachusetts union organizer with Marta Alicia Rivera; a photo and quote endorsing the referendum question by Randall Forsberg; and in the center, a photo of a smiling Michael Dukakis at his desk, with the quote: "The people of Central America want from the American people only those things we ourselves treasure most – respect for self-determination, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and the equitable and democratic sharing of opportunities. We as Americans have an obligation to protect those values and to seek alternatives to intervention and militarism."[49] The referendum question won in most districts and Dukakis used the results the following spring to proclaim "Central America Week", stating in part, "Whereas the voters of Massachusetts voted overwhelmingly, on November 6, 1984, to urge Congress to end the shipment of arms and other military aid which would prolong the war in Central America and lead to the overthrow of local governments, and … Whereas, The people of Massachusetts have undertaken major efforts to provide material aid and political support to relieve the suffering in Central America and to bring a just end to war in this region… I, Michael Dukakis… proclaim

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[49] Flier, "Remember Vietnam?" *circa* October 1984. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 4, Folder 282.

March 17-25, 1985 as CENTRAL AMERICA WEEK."[50] Thus, Dukakis joined the Massachusetts delegation in Congress to make Massachusetts the most visible and unified state in opposition to Reagan's Central American policies. As was the case with the freeze movement, grassroots activism had percolated up.

The 1985 Embargo Protests

In the spring of 1985, the Reagan administration imposed an economic embargo on Nicaragua. To many solidarity activists, the embargo, beyond promising greater hardship for the people of Nicaragua, seemed to presage war. Over the previous two years, U.S. Army and National Guard units had been conducting large, highly visible military maneuvers called "Big Pine" just across the border in Honduras.[51] In response to the administration's escalating saber-rattling, solidarity activists in the United States undertook a national "Pledge of Resistance" (POR) campaign, in which signatories pledged to conduct massive civil disobedience in the event of U.S. war on Nicaragua or in El Salvador. The hope was to maintain the specter of Vietnam-era scale street protest as a deterrent to a U.S. invasion of a Central American nation.[52]

By the spring of 1985, huge, often boisterous, pledge meetings were taking place across Massachusetts. Many activists described the Reagan administration's embargo as an act of war and argued the pledge should be activated. Yet national leaders of the POR

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[50] "A Proclamation By His Excellency, Michael S. Dukakis, Governor," 1985. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box, 4, Folder 229.

[51] LeoGrande, 316-18.

[52] New York Times, May 8, 1985; Boston Globe, May 8, 1985. Interview with Frances Crowe, December 3, 1996.

pushed for independent regional action. Frances Crowe declared, "More and more people are beginning to think that something has got to be done quickly and it [the POR call for action] should be activated now. Personally, I'm ready now."[53] As a result of this impatience, a number of localities across the U.S. moved on their own in invoking the pledge's call to action.[54]

On May 7, 1985, anti-embargo protests took place throughout the United States, each of which targeted federal buildings. As over 300 activists were arrested in San Francisco, cradle of the solidarity movement, over 500 activists were arrested in Boston and 135 activists were arrested at the Springfield Federal Building in Western Massachusetts, including, Frances Crowe.[55] Again the issue of self-determination was emphasized. "I feel very strongly that people in that country [Nicaragua] have a right to self-determination," proclaimed Mitchell Goslin of Amherst after his civil disobedience.[56] University of Massachusetts Professor Patrick Sullivan of Faculty for Peace declared, "The embargo is an act of war and congressional opposition has got to be mounted."[57]

As anti-embargo protests took place in New York City, Seattle, Chicago, New Haven, Denver, Santa Fe and smaller communities such as Worcester and Pittsfield,

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[53] Springfield Daily News, May 8, 1985. Interview with Frances Crowe, December 3, 1996.

[54] *Ibid.*

[55] *Ibid.*

[56] Undated newspaper article, *circa* May 8, 1985, Frances Private Crowe Collection, Northampton, Massachusetts.

[57] *Ibid.*

Massachusetts, by far the largest occurred in Boston.[58] Throughout the day on May 17, Boston-area solidarity activists trickled into the JFK Federal Building, milling about or eating at the public cafeteria. By late afternoon, over 500 activists converged to the building's front lobby and sat down, taking up anti-embargo chants, determined to stay past the 6:30 p.m. closing time. Outside the building, between 1,000-2,000 supporters protested the U.S. embargo. The atmosphere was loud and raucous. Numerous signs such as those reading "Reagan's Peace Proposal: Drop Dead Or We'll Kill You" and "Embargo Reagan" drove home the protestors' message. The Boston Globe declared the protest "reminiscent in its tone and intensity of anti-Vietnam war rallies of the late 1960s."[59] Among the speakers at the energetic rally was African American community activist Mel King and State Senator George D. Bachrach of Watertown who declared, "We can still understand the difference between right and wrong. This is a simple issue. The government of Nicaragua is indigenous. We are the interloper."[60] Also addressing the crowd was Richard Bell, an aide to Democrat John Kerry who'd been elected to the U.S. Senate seat held by retiring Paul Tsongas in 1984. Kerry, who had been the conduit between freeze activists and Mike Dukakis as Lieutenant Governor, sought to continue fostering his ties with the activist left by reaching out to it on Central America. Bell declared, "Senator Kerry commends [the demonstrators inside] for your moral courage and moral leadership… civil disobedience is the highest form of political activity."[61]

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[58] New York Times, May 8, 1985, 16; Boston Globe, May 8, 1985. 1 and 10.

[59] Boston Globe, May 8, 1985, 1 and 10.

[60] *Ibid.*

[61] *Ibid.*

At 6:30 p.m., police and federal marshals began the mass arrests with most protestors walking out but dozens choosing to go limp. The arrestees were transferred in groups of thirty to U.S. District Court for processing that went on through the night, through the next day and into the subsequent night. Those who cooperated were processed and eventually released on their own recognizance, while those who refused by giving their names as "John Doe", "Jane Doe" or "Sandino" were held and threatened with perjury. Among those committing civil disobedience was fifty-eight year old Rev. Frank Dorman of Cambridge, who had led the Massachusetts delegation on the first Witness for Peace mission to Nicaragua in 1983. Dorman told a reporter for the Boston Globe, "As an ordained minister, it should be recorded that we are here because of acts of conscience."[62] Twenty-three year old Ellen Kage of Waltham declared, "What I did was not criminal. What we are protesting is criminal..." [63] Greenfield resident Frank Giordana declared after his arrest in Boston, "The hottest place in hell is reserved for those who do nothing... I consider this an act of patriotism."[64] Boston POR coordinator Catherine Hoffmann commented, "We are pleased – both about the number of people who participated in civil disobedience and those who took part in the legal demonstration."[65]

As hundreds were arrested in Boston and Springfield, smaller actions took place in Greenfield and Williamsburg, while 100 activists in Pittsfield, after a ninety-minute

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[62] *Ibid.*

[63] *Ibid.*

[64] Daily Hampshire Gazette, May 8, 1985, 11.

[65] Boston Globe, May 8, 1985, 1.

vigil, sent medical aid to Nicaragua in a "symbolic embargo busting action".[66] The anti-embargo protests of 1985 coincided with the fast-growing anti-apartheid movement, which was sweeping the nation's campuses and African American communities, with its call for economic divestment from the white supremacist nation of South Africa. For many, the fact that the United States had imposed an embargo on a poor nation whose government was struggling to help the poor, while refusing to divest from a wealthy nation that kept the majority of its citizens impoverished and oppressed under a racial caste system, pointed up the corruption of U.S. foreign policy. For many, the contrast of U.S. policy toward South Africa and Nicaragua further highlighted the administration's selective concerns over human rights which appeared dictated more by capitalist imperatives and cold war strategy than democratic principles. Beginning in the spring of 1985, the solidarity movement increasingly took up the chant, "Boycott South Africa, Not Nicaragua!"[67]

In early June, 1985 Congress voted 248-184 to send $27 million in "non-lethal" aid to the contras.[68] The entire Massachusetts congressional delegation voted 'no', and had in fact played a pivotal role in defeating Reagan's proposed military aid package for the contras earlier in the year.[69] Shortly after that vote, however, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega took a jet to Moscow in search of aid in a move much criticized as ill timed and ill considered. As a result, Reagan was able to turn the sagging congressional support for contra aid around and procure a compromise "non-lethal" aid package,

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[66] Daily Hampshire Gazette, May 8, 1985, 11.

[67] Boston Globe, May 9, 1985, 10.

[68] New York Times, June 13, 1985.

[69] *Ibid.*

keeping the armed Nicaraguan opposition's hope for further assistance alive.[70] The vote soon sparked renewed protest across the United States. Civil disobedience resumed on June 12, 1985, when ninety-three activists, led by a procession of drum-beating Buddhists from the Leverett Peace Pagoda, were arrested in Chicopee outside the Westover Air Base. Many handcuffed themselves to gates while others entwined themselves with rope to make arrest more difficult.[71] One protestor, Joan Pinkham of Amherst, told a local reporter, "As patriotic citizens it is our duty to protest and resist."[72] During the protest Chicopee Mayor Richard Lak arrived to survey the scene. Sympathetic to the protestors cause but deeply concerned about the cost to the city in terms of police overtime, Mayor Lak stated, "It is not the cause we are objecting to but the cost."[73] Protestors responded that they believed the costs were to be picked up by the federal government, that it was not their intention to cause hardship for the financially strapped city, but that the protests were nevertheless a moral imperative. Meanwhile, twenty-four activists were arrested at the Greenfield I.R.S. building, including Freeze activist Judith Scheckel.[74]

In Boston, reaction to the $27 million aid package rekindled the militant protests of the previous month. As POR protests erupted in San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Kansas City, Seattle and Eugene, Oregon, over 1,500 protestors once again converged on the JFK Federal Building. "We are here to organize an active resistance to war",

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[70] LeoGrande, 426-8.

[71] Springfield Morning Union, June 13, 1985, 1 and 17.

[72] Undated newspaper clipping, *circa* June 13, 1985, Frances Crowe Private Collection.

[73] *Ibid.*

[74] Springfield Morning Union, June 13, 1985, 1 and 17.

proclaimed POR organizer David Truscello, adding, "We will not permit Ronald Reagan to drag this country into this war. We are going to make sure that we are a significant factor in his decision to wage war. We're going to come back. We will not go away."[75]

Learning from the experience of the May embargo protests, Peter Thomas, regional administrator of the General Services Administration which ran the JFK Federal Building decided to avoid making arrests. Anticipating the protests, he had the building barricaded off and instructed police to simply remove but not arrest those breaching the barricade. Nevertheless, employees entering the JFK Federal Building needed to produce identification. "It's not our intention to arrest anyone," Thomas declared. Pleased with the results, Thomas continued, "I must say we came up with a pretty good strategy."[76] In response, POR organizer Anne Shumway told a reporter, "We consider this a victory of sorts because we partially closed down the building."[77]

The contra aid protests spilled over into the next day in Boston as hundreds of activists marched upon the Armed Forces Recruiting Center on Tremont St. and then the Coast Guard Marine Safety Office on Commercial St. where an I.N.S. branch was located. Chanting, "No recruiting today!" the boisterous protestors were held at bay by barricades and mounted police, with over eighty being taken away after breaching police lines. "The people here are willing to risk arrest, their jobs, being put in the files of the F.B.I. and being trampled by police horses in order to make it clear that the public won't

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[75] Boston Globe, June 13, 1985. 31.

[76] *Ibid.*

[77] *Ibid.*

tolerate the killing of innocent people in Central America," declared Shelly Kellman of the Boston POR.[78]

Confrontation between activists and police were not the only source of tension to emerge during the 1985 embargo and contra aid protests. Throughout the first half of the 1980s, there was an undercurrent of tension in the solidarity movement between those with a generally more moral and pacifist orientation and those who more ardently proclaimed their Marxist sympathies with revolutionary forces in Central America. Although these groups often shared similar interpretations of U.S. policy and sympathy for popular and leftist forces in Central America, what Van Gosse referred to as "mutual stylistic discomfort" often surfaced at the POR meetings of 1985.[79] For some, the more strident militancy of others smacked of a certain *machismo*, with more outspokenly militant groups tending to be more male in composition. Age also seemed to factor in, as older activists often took an eye-rolling attitude to the younger, clenched-fist militants. Lois Ahrens of the CAWG, in her thirties and forties during the 1980s, recalls disputes with those she describes as "more partisan" who had a "much more unshakeable, non-questioning attitude about the infallibility of the Sandinistas."[80] Recalling the large Pledge meetings of early 1985, Ahrens says, "there would be these guys who were the 'revolutionary guys', that were trying to take a lot of space, and there were those of us

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[78] Boston Globe, June 14, 1985, 75.

[79] Van Gosse, "'The North American Front': Central American Solidarity in the Reagan Era", in Davis and Sprinker, eds.

[80] Interview with Lois Ahrens, December 8, 1996.

who were older than they were, and women, that maybe wanted to be less confrontational…" But, Ahrens adds, "As a general rule, we won out."[81]

Another cleavage that came into stark relief by 1985 was a regional one reminiscent of the divisions between Boston-based and Western Massachusetts activists during the Seabrook protests. Frances Crowe describes these divisions as not so much ideological as organizational. According to Crowe, the Boston-based, largely Cambridge-centered groups, which had closer ties to national organizations, tended to be more "bureaucratic" and "top down" as opposed to Western Massachusetts solidarity activists who she regards as more "grass roots" and "bottom up".[82] Indeed, whereas large national groups like CISPES in the early 1980s and NECAN subsequently, played major roles in the eastern part of the state, in Western Massachusetts the movement tended to be decentralized and composed of a plethora of small "affinity groups" such as the CAWG which operated independently not only from other groups but even its own parent organization, the AFSC.[83]

Despite the divisions between eastern and western halves of the state, Massachusetts emerged from the 1985 embargo and contra aid protests with an even higher profile in the national movement. This trend reached its apex in 1986 with the anti-C.I.A. protests that swept college campuses across the country culminating on April 27, 1987 with the massive anti-C.I.A. protests and arrests outside the Agency's headquarters in Langley, Virginia. Since the C.I.A.'s role in Central America was well

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[81] *Ibid.*

[82] Interview with Frances Crowe, December 3, 1996.

[83] *Ibid.*

known, from its mining of Nicaragua's harbors to its training of the contras, the Agency had become a lightning rod for militant campus protest by Central American solidarity groups. In 1986-7, the C.I.A. became the focus of militant protest in Massachusetts.[84]

The University of Massachusetts, Amherst Anti-C.I.A. Protests and Trial

In early November, University of Massachusetts, Amherst students belonging to the Radical Student Union (RSU) and the Central American Solidarity Association (CASA) geared up for the impending arrival of C.I.A. recruiters on campus. The student activists argued that since university policy forbid criminal organizations from recruiting on campus, the C.I.A. should be banned due to their illegal activities around the world and especially, in the radical students' view, in Central America. On Thursday evening, November 13, 1986, anti-C.I.A. students held a protest and candlelight vigil, which succeeded in getting a C.I.A. informational session cancelled. The anti-C.I.A. students faced counter-protests from pro-C.I.A. students, arguing efforts to ban the Agency from recruiting on campus violated students' first amendment rights to free association and undermined national security.[85] The next day, Friday, November 14, the radical students tried to halt the planned C.I.A. recruitment session, but the Agency quietly relocated and rescheduled, thereby evading disruption. Thirteen students, all from RSU and CASA, then occupied the office of Chancellor Joseph Duffey to demand a meeting on the

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[84] New York Times, April 17, 1987.

[85] Daily Hampshire Gazette, November 15, 1986; Valley Advocate, April 20, 1987.

university's policy on C.I.A. recruitment. Refusing to vacate at time of the building's closing, campus police entered the office and arrested the students.[86]

The University of Massachusetts subsequently sought an injunction limiting where the students could go on campus. The RSU and CASA argued that this was an infringement of the students first amendment rights and an effort intimidate the movement to ban the C.I.A. from campus[87]. On November 24, 1986, hundreds of University of Massachusetts students along with other "five college" area students and community members turned out to protest the injunctions and push for a ban on C.I.A. recruitment on campus. The protest was one of many hostile receptions C.I.A. campus recruiters had received on campuses throughout the fall. The protestors occupied Munson Hall, an administrative nerve center on the campus, and held the building for seven hours. Surrounding the building were forty campus police joined by forty outside police from the University of Massachusetts, Boston campus, the town of Amherst and state police in riot control gear.[88]

On hand for the protest rally and joining the students in the building occupation was 1960s veteran activist and Worcester native Abbie Hoffman, who was in the area to promote his idea of a new national student organization.[89] Although the young students reacted coolly at first to Hoffman, whom they saw somewhat as a relic of another era, the Yippie founder won them over. At the occupation, Hoffman declared, "Back to the

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[86] *Ibid.*

[87] *Ibid.*

[88] Ibid.

[89] Marty Jezer, Abbie Hoffman: American Rebel (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1992).

future. It's 1968 out there!"[90] As the police began to arrest the building occupiers, three protestors sought to block a police bus with the arrested protestors from leaving by sitting down in their path. Among those three was former first daughter Amy Carter, then an activist student at Brown University.[91]

All in all, the police arrested fifty-nine protestors. Those inside the university building were charged with trespassing while Carter and the other two who blocked the police vehicle were charged with disorderly conduct. Four police were injured in the action, a few reporting bite marks and one a dislocated shoulder. The arrestees were held in handcuffs for over seven hours. Chancellor Duffy ordered Hoffman banned from the campus and declared, "If Hoffman wants to have a trial on the C.I.A. that's fine. But to bring a public institution to a halt so he can do that is unjust."[92]

Although most of those arrested for carrying out civil disobedience accepted suspended fines, fifteen, including Hoffman and Carter, decided to challenge the charges of trespassing and disorderly conduct by pleading not guilty due to the "necessity defense" at the county court in nearby Northampton. The group's case was taken up by a national organization called the "C.I.A. on Trial Project" which hoped to turn the case into a national *cause celebre* and use the trial as a showcase for exposing what it regarded as the crimes of the C.I.A., especially in Central America.[93] Hampshire District Court Judge Richard F. Connon agreed to permit a necessity defense on the condition that the fifteen arrested protestors who insisted on a trial be tried together so as

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[90] Daily Hampshire Gazette, November 25, 1986.

[91] *Ibid.*

[92] *Ibid.*

[93] New York Times, April 14, 16 and 17, 1987.

to streamline the process.[94] (After the case, Judge Connon told a reporter that presiding over the politicized case "didn't upset me. Variety is good. It breaks up the monotony of hearing all those drunk driving cases. It's the most notorious I've heard and probably the hardest to handle.")[95]

Radical attorney Leonard Weinglass who had defended Hoffman and the "Chicago Seven" in the late 1960s and early 1970s headed up the defense. In a strategy that bore many similarities to the Sam Lovejoy trial over a decade earlier, the defense summoned several high profile witnesses on the defendants behalf, such as 1971 *Pentagon Papers* whistle-blower Daniel Ells berg, former C.I.A. agent turned Agency critic Ralph McGhee, former attorney general turned radical activist Ramsey Clark, and ex-contra leader Edgar Chamorro, all of whom were to testify to C.I.A. crimes in Central America and around the world. Meanwhile, the "C.I.A. on Trial Project" raised $15,000 for the defense including $7,000 of Hoffman's own money.[96]

Thomas Lesser, the Northampton lawyer who in 1974 had defended Sam Lovejoy using the necessity defense, joined Weinglass in his defense. Their strategy was to use the national press and media attention that now focused on Northampton to put the C.I.A. on trial. Especially damning were C.I.A. insider Ralph McGhee's testimony on C.I.A. misinformation and the testimony of former Contra Edgar Chamorro, who detailed C.I.A. instruction given to the Contras on how to assassinate local officials in such a way as to make it appear the Sandinistas had committed the murders.[97] As

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[94] Valley Advocate, April 20, 1987.

[95] Daily Hampshire Gazette, April 16, 1987.

[96] New York Times, April 14, 17 and 18, 1987.

[97] Valley Advocate, April 20, 1987.

Leonard Weinglass repeatedly referred to instances of what he described as C.I.A. crimes around the world, the prosecution stuck to a strategy of not countering the defense witnesses and arguing that C.I.A. behavior was irrelevant, that the case hinged on the narrow question of whether trespassing and disorderly conduct had taken place. (After the case, District Attorney W. Michael Ryan, after the case said he believed the narrow technical focus was the best strategy, but added, "If it came to defending the C.I.A. or losing, I'd rather lose.")[98]

The case turned the town of Northampton upside down as news crews from around the country set up their cameras and satellite trucks outside the court and anti- and pro-C.I.A. protestors countered each other with rival chants ("Hey hey, ho, ho, the C.I.A. has got to go!" was met with "Hey, hey, ho, ho, Amy Carter has got to go!")[99] Carter spent much of her time dodging much of the national press. She did, however, speak with a local journalist from The Valley Advocate, telling the reporter, "Whenever someone sacrifices a part of themselves for justice, it aids the cycle of change."[100] Asked when her activism came to focus on the C.I.A., the former first daughter responded, "They'd always outraged me, but I guess I decided to make it a priority when I was researching South Africa during my senior year of high school. I found out that the C.I.A. had given information on the African National Congress to the South African government, and that a C.I.A. agent was present when Nelson Mandela was arrested."[101]

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[98] Daily Hampshire Gazette, April 16, 1987. 12.

[99] *Ibid.*

[100] Valley Advocate, April 20, 1987, 7.

[101] *Ibid.*

On the final day of the trial, Abbie Hoffman addressed the jury as part of the defense's closing argument:

> This trial is about many things, from trespassing to questioning acts by the most powerful agency in government. And here we are in Hampshire District Court. You have seen the defendants act with dignity and decorum. ... Witnesses, many of whom occupied high positions of power, have come before you and have told you the C.I.A. often breaks the law, often lies. . The judge is here, the public, the press. I ask you, is it we, the defendants who are operating outside the system? Or does what you have heard about the C.I.A. activities in Nicaragua and elsewhere mean it is they that have strayed outside the limits of democracy and law?[102]

In her closing statement, Prosecutor Diane Fernald the jury of six, "We're talking about crimes that were committed down the road in Hampshire County. We're not talking about illegal activities of the C.I.A. in Central America or elsewhere."[103] But on April 15, 1987, it was C.I.A. crimes in Central America and not the protestors' illegal activities, which most moved the six jurors. The panel pronounced the defendants 'not guilty', acquitting them of all charges. Upon the jury's announcement of its verdict, the courtroom erupted into cheers and hugs and was only with great difficulty calmed by Judge Connon's threat to clear the courtroom.[104] The Hampshire County district attorney W. Michael Ryan, referring to the jury of six, which ranged in age from thirty-four to seventy-seven conceded, "If there's a message, it was that the jury was composed of Middle America. It was a great jury for us. They weren't kids. There were a couple of senior citizens. And they believed the defense. Middle America doesn't want the C.I.A.

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[102] Daniel Simon and Abbie Hoffman, eds., The Best of Abbie Hoffman, (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1989), 387.

[103] New York Times, April 16, 1987.

[104] Daily Hampshire Gazette, April 16, 1987, 1.

doing what they are doing."[105] Leonard Weinglass, soaked with champagne at an after trial victory party, declared, "It can only be read one way… the jury had to find that the defendants had a right to occupy that building and the illegal activities of the C.I.A. justified a not guilty verdict."[106] A jubilant Amy Carter exclaimed, "A jury of six in Northampton found the C.I.A. guilty of larger crimes than trespass and disorderly conduct and decided that we had a legal reason to protest."[107] Upon learning of the verdict in Northampton, former President Jimmy Carter described himself as a "very proud father tonight", adding, "Amy's been arrested four times, three times protesting apartheid and this last time for what she considers, and I consider, illegal activity of the C.I.A. in Nicaragua."[108]

Interviews with jurors after the trial revealed the defense had badly miscalculated in not trying to counter the defense's witnesses against the C.I.A. Walter LaFreniere, a seventy-seven year old cutlery worker and former union shop steward told a reporter, "We know that these kids [and Hoffman] committed a crime which I'm totally against. But they did it for a reason. These young people, they weren't violent. They were there for a reason and one reason alone, and that's to get rid of that C.I.A… There wasn't one C.I.A. agent that came there to deny these charges."[109] A thirty-seven year old registered nurse from Ware named Donna Moddy stated, "I think anybody that would've sat in that

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[105] New York Times, April 16, 1987. Ryan told another journalist, "It was a great jury. It was a conservative jury. The moment they were empanelled I thought we had it won." Daily Hampshire Gazette, April 16, 1987, 1.

[106] Daily Hampshire Gazette, April 16, 1987, 1 and 12.

[107] *Ibid.*

[108] New York Times, April 16, 1987.

[109] Daily Hampshire Gazette, April 16, 1987, 1.

courtroom and listened to the expert witnesses, anybody would have felt the same way… It was as if the students had no recourse to speak with the administration [of the University of Massachusetts.]"[110] So impressed with the students was sixty-four year old Anne Gaffney, a clerk at the U.S. Veterans Administration Medical Center in Leeds, that she declared, "These young people are doing what perhaps most of us should be doing, but don't have time to."[111]

The Sanctuary Movement Comes to Massachusetts

During the 1980s, over a million and a half Central Americans were displaced by the region's civil wars. Although many settled in refugee camps within their native countries or in neighboring countries, it has been estimated that as many as 750,000 Central Americans made their way to the United States, of whom 400-500,000 were Salvadorans. Many of the refugees, especially those from El Salvador, contended that they were seeking asylum from persecution and that death would await them should they return. In El Salvador such claims carried a good deal of credibility. Yet, unlike political refugees from Cuba, Vietnam, the Soviet Union or the East Bloc, who were traditionally welcomed into the United States, those fleeing persecution by U.S.-supported regimes were routinely denied asylum. According to the Reagan administration, the vast majority of the refugees from Central America were motivated by economic factors, and the

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[110] *Ibid.*

[111] *Ibid.*

I.N.S. was committed to returning the ever growing flow of refugees back to their countries of origin.[112]

Beginning in 1980 in the southwest of the United States, church groups near the Arizona-Mexico border began providing church "sanctuary" for Central American refugees fleeing persecution. Tucson became the center of the sanctuary movement, which soon spread to New Mexico and up into the west coast. The movement exploded by 1983, as churches of various denominations throughout the United States began providing asylum for predominantly Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees. The sanctuary movement quickly became an embarrassment for the Reagan administration as refugees shared accounts of terror at the hands of their anti-communist governments and paramilitaries. By 1983, the F.B.I. had infiltrated the growing sanctuary movement with numerous informants and by 1984, in a high profile national trial, the Justice Department began the prosecution of eleven members of the original sanctuary church in Tucson, Arizona.[113]

The movement had a special appeal to those with religious sensibilities (Protestant, Catholic and Jewish religious leaders were all well represented) and the movement's resemblance to the nineteenth century Underground Railroad resonated powerfully with radical clergy and lay people alike. Declared one national spokesman for the movement, Rev. Peter J. Sammon of St. Theresa's Roman Catholic Church in

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[112] New York Times, December 23, 1985, 1 and 11; Renny Golden and Michael McConnel, Sanctuary: The New Underground Railroad (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1986); Ann Crittenden, Sanctuary: A Story of American Conscience and Law in Collision (New York: Weidenfeld and Nelson, 1988).

[113] *Ibid.*

Sacramento, California, "In our view, sending these people back to El Salvador or Guatemala is the same thing as putting Jews on boxcars bound for Dachau."[114]

By early 1985, the sanctuary movement expanded from churches to whole municipalities. Earlier that year, Berkeley, California and St. Paul, Minnesota become the first two cities whose city councils voted to declare their municipalities official "sanctuaries" for those fleeing persecution in Central America, and enjoined municipal officials, as far as legally possible, not to cooperate with federal efforts to deport such refugees. Chicago became the third city to declare itself a sanctuary through proclamation of its mayor. The Reagan administration strongly condemned these sanctuary resolutions, arguing word would spread throughout Central America and give rise to a mass exodus for the United States by economic refugees falsely believing these cities could provide them with legal safe haven.[115]

Cambridge, Massachusetts, which had led the way in its effort to declare itself a nuclear free zone in 1983, sought in May of 1985 to become the next city to declare itself a sanctuary. The campaign was spearheaded by Cambridge solidarity activists, especially those with the Old Cambridge Baptist Church, which had been providing sanctuary for refugees from El Salvador. On May 8, 1985, before what the Boston Globe described as a "packed and partisan audience", the nine-member Cambridge city council considered a resolution proclaiming Cambridge to be a sanctuary for refugees from El Salvador, Guatemala and Haiti.[116] Witnesses included sanctuary workers from the Old

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[114] New York Times, December 23, 1985, 11.

[115] *Ibid.*; Boston Globe, May 9, 1985, 1 and 10.

[116] Boston Globe, May 9, 1985, 1 and 10.

Cambridge Baptist Church, local academics, a representative from *Centro Presente*, a refugee assistance organization, several Salvadoran and Haitian refugees and Richard Bell, aid to Senator John Kerry. Estella Ramirez, a Salvadoran trade unionist and refugee told the city councilors, "It is not for economic reasons that we have come here. We have been forced to come by the political situation in our country. For us, there is no justice and no food. And if we demand them, we are tortured or killed."[117] Speaking for Senator Kerry, Richard Bell denounced the administration's refusal to grant asylum to Salvadoran refugees as "a stain on this country's honor."[118]

Supporting the resolution, council member Alice Wolff declared, "many things start at the local level, and we can't wait for the federal government to come around... I believe we have an obligation to shelter people who are being persecuted in other countries," adding, "We cannot help send people back to countries where they are persecuted and killed."[119] Cambridge Mayor Leonard Russell objected to the resolution, arguing it would mislead Central American refugees into thinking Cambridge could offer more safety than it actually could, to which council member Wolff responded, "We can send them a message that we will do what we can. If we don't, we will be sending them a message of despair."[120] Finally, the Cambridge city council voted narrowly, 5-4, to proclaim itself an official sanctuary, adding to the national momentum of the sanctuary movement.[121]

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[117] *Ibid.*

[118] *Ibid.*

[119] *Ibid.*; also, New York Times, April 9, 1985, 12.

[120] *Ibid.*

[121] *Ibid.*

The sanctuary movement continued to pick up speed over the spring of 1985 as two Guatemalan brothers "Joaquin" and "Pedro" arrived amidst great publicity at the Mt. Toby Friends Meeting House in Leverett, Massachusetts.[122] Guatemala, ruled by a series of military dictators since the U.S. sponsored military overthrow of democratically elected President Jacabo Arbenz in 1954, had an even more egregious human rights record than El Salvador. In 1977, the Carter administration had cut aid to the right-wing government. Estimates of the numbers of peasants massacred between 1954 and the 1980s were well over 100,000. In El Salvador, rightist military officials spoke enviously of the "Guatemalan solution", code for all out war on the population.[123]

Using aliases to protect loved ones still in Guatemala, "Pedro" and "Joaquin" were part of a caravan of Central American refugees which began that year in Phoenix, Arizona and stopped in fifteen cities in a highly publicized cross-country trek. Approximately 100-150 people took part in a welcoming ceremony and potluck dinner for the brothers upon their arrival at Mt. Toby. One speaker told those assembled, "We can no longer rest in our privileged place of safety, with our hearts and resources untouched by the needs of refugees fleeing from cruel, vicious assaults on their lives under conditions of war and despotism..."[124]

On hand to welcome the Guatemalan brothers was Frances Crowe, who declared, "We choose to give these political refugees not just a measure of safety, but also an

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[122] Transcript Telegram, April 6, 1985.

[123] Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, Bitter Fruit: The Untold Story of the American Coup Attempt in Guatemala (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1983).

[124] Transcript Telegram, April 6, 1985.

opportunity to speak about their lives and experiences."[125] Pedro and Joaquin proceeded to do just that, doing interviews for press and media throughout New England, including a Hartford television station and the Boston Globe, as well as holding numerous talks before audiences at Mt. Toby. Wearing masks for interviews in order to maintain their anonymity and thereby protect loved ones in Guatemala from government retaliation, the brothers dramatically and personally brought to life for many New Englanders the horrors confronting so many of the poor in Central America. Speaking through an interpreter, Joaquin told of his work with a small Christian group which sought to help Guatemala's poor. After five members of his group were killed, including a nun who was raped, Joaquin fled to Honduras. When members of the Guatemalan military could not discover his whereabouts from his wife, they assembled the children of the house and shot the family dog.[126] Meanwhile, Pedro had gone into hiding within Guatemala, sleeping at a different house every night, wanted by the military for poetry about the poor he'd read over the radio. Speaking to 150 people at Mt. Toby on one occasion, Joaquin explained, "We are tired of the terror… We have a duty to our people to speak out… the wave of terror unleashed by the army is against the entire people. Only the army and the rich are not suspected of being subversive."[127]

One of the Western Massachusetts residents moved by the brothers' accounts was their interpreter, Julie Rappaport, a young activist in her twenties who'd recently become active in the solidarity movement with the Central American Working Group.

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[125] *Ibid.*

[126] Daily Hampshire Gazette, June 17, 1985. Interview with Julie Rappaport, December 10, 1996.

[127] Springfield Daily News, July 22, 1985.

Raised in an educated, non-political Jewish middle-class home, Rappaport's political awareness began in the early 1970s when her older brother was nearly drafted to fight in the Vietnam war and the family discussed options such as moving him to Canada. By high school, Rappaport had a general political awareness, which deepened during her years at Harvard from 1980 to 1984, where she became involved with feminist groups, including battered women's service groups and participated in some Central American and anti-apartheid activism. It was with her move to Western Massachusetts in 1984, however, that Rappaport's activism came to focus intensely on Central America.[128]

Rappaport's role as Joaquin and Pedro's interpreter led her deeper into the movement. Discussing her role as interpreter, Rappaport stated, "There's nothing like having to repeat atrocities... horrors, in the first person, to really give someone pause. It's one thing to... read a book or a newspaper. It's another thing to be standing next to a person [saying] this is what happened to me, or this is what I saw. And so I became more and more personally affected by what I was hearing, so I decided I wanted to go to Guatemala... I wanted to see what he [Joaquin] was telling me..."[129] Thus, from her role as interpreter in the sanctuary movement, Rappaport was drawn deeper into the movement, joining the hundreds of North American and Western European internationalists who trekked to Central America during the decade in support of the region's popular and revolutionary movements.

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[128] Interview with Julie Rappaport, December 10, 1996.

[129] *Ibid.*

The Internationalists

During the 1980s, tens of thousands of U.S. internationalists traveled to Central America as part of a heightened commitment to solidarity activism. El Salvador and revolutionary Nicaragua were by far the most common destinations for such activists. According to some journalists, over 100,000 U.S. citizens traveled to Nicaragua alone during the decade, many to participate for a few weeks in the coffee harvest or merely to show support for the Sandinistas and protest Reagan administration policies by their presence. While most remained only a few weeks or months, a permanent presence of approximately seven thousand internationalists emerged by the mid-1980s in a Managua neighborhood known as "Gringolandia". A few of the most committed internationalists left the relative safety of Managua for the war ravaged countryside. Among them was Portland, Oregon native Benjamin Linder who became a martyr of the solidarity movement in 1986 when he was killed during a contra attack in Nicaragua's northern Jinotega province where the young engineer had helped remote villages build hydro-electric dams. Meanwhile, other internationalists traveled to El Salvador where the Salvadoran armed forces eyed them warily. The murders of the four U.S. church women and two AFL-CIO labor organizers at the beginning of the decade signaled that even U.S. citizens were not safe in that war-torn nation. Later, in 1990, an internationalist named Michael Divine disappeared in Guatemala, a victim of that nation's rightist paramilitary. Thus, although most internationalists partook in some of the hardships and

poverty known to most Central Americans for a couple of weeks, a smaller number literally put their lives on the line.[130]

The internationalists of the 1980s represented many shades of commitment, but all embraced a global outlook and activism with deep roots in the U.S. left. After the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, scores of U.S. citizens like journalist John Reed traveled to the Soviet Union to witness what many on the left hoped would be a new birth for humanity.[131] The Soviet Union continued as the revolutionary beacon for much of the Old Left until the late 1930s when Republican Spain, at the frontline of the war against fascism, became the Mecca of the Popular Front. Tens of thousands of U.S. citizens volunteered for the Lincoln Brigades and headed to Spain in what they viewed as an epic struggle pitting the forces of oppression against the global crusade for democracy and socialism.[132]

As the Soviet Union became a less appealing focal point for leftist internationalism, many young people in the U.S. turned to the more religiously influenced civil rights movement in the 1960s as the vehicle through which to fight for a more just and humane world. Thousands of idealistic northern college students, black and white, joined SNCC and CORE and headed into the heart of the Jim Crow south to share the hardships and poverty of oppressed African Americans and fight for freedom and equality in a part of the United States that to many had the feel of a foreign country.

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[130] Paul Berman, "In Search of Ben Linder's Killers", The New Yorker, September 23, 1996; John Brentlinger, The Best of What We Are: Reflections on the Nicaraguan Revolution (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995).

[131] John Reed, Ten Days That Shook the World (New York: International Publishers, 1919).

[132] Peter Carroll, The Odyssey of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

In many ways, the civil rights struggle was a return to the egalitarian spirit of the abolitionist movement a century earlier, which likewise viewed the world in terms of a global humanity.

Largely due to the impact of Liberation Theology, the internationalism of the 1980s Central American solidarity movement represented a confluence of the religiously motivated civil rights movement of the 1960s and the secular Marxism, which influenced those in the Lincoln Brigades of the 1930s, and the *Venceramos* Brigades which traveled to Cuba in the 1960s and early 1970s. Among the internationalists of the 1980s were those whose activism was predominantly faith based, such as the activists who traveled to Nicaragua with Witness for Peace, others whose politics grew out of a broad democratic and secular humanism, and others whose politics grew out of an ideologically orthodox Marxism. In this, the internationalists of the 1980s mirrored the revolutionaries and popular movement activists of Central America themselves.[133]

By the latter half of the 1980s, Julie Rappaport had formed a more personal connection with the suffering people of Central America through the first person accounts she translated and a romantic relationship that blossomed with "Joaquin". Rappaport hoped to go to Guatemala but was prevented due to complications in the arrangements. So instead, Rappaport departed for El Salvador where she spent a year in Chaletenango province, an FMLN stronghold and scene of some of El Salvador's most savage fighting. It was a trip that dramatically altered the way she viewed the country and its conflict. Before going to El Salvador, Rappaport had what she later described as a more "facile view" of the war in which the FMLN guerrillas were the "good guys" and

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[133] Paul Berman, "In Search of Ben Linder's Killers", The New Yorker, September 23, 1996.

the Salvadoran army the "bad guys". Her sympathies did not change but became, in Rappaport's words, "more complex". "The civil war wasn't exactly what I had in mind," recalled Rappaport. "Something that became clear the longer I was there was how complicated the situation [was] … war is a shitty thing. war is bad for everybody… it doesn't make anybody into good guys… it's ugly [and] that was hard."[134]

Rappaport's views on many things changed while in El Salvador. Rappaport soon came to see the U.S. financed Salvadoran military as being even worse than she had envisioned in her most Manichean imaginings. Rappaport not only witnessed Army atrocities, but also was herself subject to frequent and humiliating sexual harassment at the point of M-16s by uniformed soldiers of the Salvadoran Army. Describing the Army as "hideous", Rappaport summed up her changed view of the conflict, stating, "This is the pure evil and this is what has to be done to confront a profound, profound, profound evil and it wasn't always admirable… but necessary."[135] Rappaport was especially saddened by the numbers of youth impressed into the war by all sides of the conflict. Despite being saddened by the coercive and sometimes brutal tactics employed by the rebels, Rappaport nevertheless felt the atrocities of the government forces eclipsed anything done by the guerrillas, and if the FMLN weren't the "good guys" she once naively held them to be, she still felt "the side that had dignity was clearly the FMLN." Rappaport described the Salvadoran armed forces as led by "horrible evil murderers… and you don't get to be Glenda the Good Witch in the face of that."[136]

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[134] Interview with Julie Rappaport, December 10, 1996.

[135] *Ibid.*

[136] *Ibid.*

Before going to El Salvador, Rappaport said she "felt compelled in a weird way to look evil in the face."[137] In El Salvador, she had many opportunities to do so. One example among many which she would later relate to North American audiences dealt with a small Salvadoran town where she was staying doing literacy training. One day the body of a local young man was found dead in the middle of the street, the victim of a right-wing death squad killing. Salvadoran death squads routinely left the tortured and disfigured bodies of their victims in public places as grisly calling cards reminding peasants of their ever-watchful presence. Recalled Rappaport, "They beheaded it and just left it there... They made clear to the whole town that noone was to touch his body."[138] Despite great personal risk, however, a young female Salvadoran literacy volunteer collected his body and took it up into the mountains for a furtive burial. Describing herself as profoundly moved upon learning of this act, Rappaport asked the woman why she did it at such personal risk to herself. "People aren't animals to be left dead in the road and he was my friend," responded the woman. Rappaport, describing the incident with the distant stare most often associated with combat veterans, stated that she was deeply moved by many such examples of "tremendous human dignity in the face of horrible, horrible events."[139] For Rappaport, as for other internationalists who experienced the tragedy of war ravaged Central America first hand, it was no longer possible to look at the conflict in a detached or abstract manner. Rappaport observed, "It's one thing to hear the army did X, Y and Z. It's another thing to look at it."[140]

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[137] *Ibid.*

[138] *Ibid.*

[139] *Ibid.*

[140] *Ibid.*

Returning to Western Massachusetts after her year in El Salvador, Rappaport set out to do all she could to personalize and humanize the conflict in the region, recounting her experiences at numerous churches and meeting houses throughout the Pioneer Valley. (Julie Rappaport later married "Joaquin", whose real name is Carlos Oliva. The couple had two children, one of whom they named in honor of Sister Gabrielle Victoria de la Roca, Carlos' friend and fellow activist in Guatemala who had been raped and murdered by members of the Guatemalan armed forces.)[141]

Lois Ahrens, a Northampton resident and fellow activist with Julie rappaport in the Central American Working Group decided after nearly a decade of Central American solidarity activism to travel to the region herself. Well into her thirties, Ahrens viewed herself as a movement veteran less susceptible to the wide-eyed romanticism and naiveté that she believed characterized the outlooks of many younger people in the movement. Although deeply committed to a humanist and progressive politics, Ahrens prided herself on her skepticism, which she traced to her family's experience in the Old Left. Born to a working class, Jewish New York City family in 1947, Ahrens was raised in the McCarthy era where she witnessed family friends and relatives cope with the 1950s Red Scare. Ahrens was close to aunts and uncles who, though still committed to leftist politics, had quit the Communist Party in disgust in 1939 due to the infamous Hitler-Stalin Pact. Ahrens believed these relatives helped instill in her a healthy iconoclasm. In 1962, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, Ahrens shocked her sixth grade English teacher by expressing support for Fidel Castro. Later, upon learning of Cuba's persecution of

[141] *Ibid.*

homosexuals from returning *Venceramos* volunteers, Ahrens would disconcert leftists with harsh denunciations of Cuba's human rights policies.[142]

For someone so steeped in a left-wing background, Ahrens was remarkably untouched by the events and political cross currents of the 1960s. During most of the decade she worked for the prestigious New York City publishing firm of McCann Erikson. Eventually, however, the spirit of the sixties caught up with her, and Ahrens asked herself, "What am I doing here?" In 1970 she quit. Unlike many of her generation who were led into radical politics through the civil rights or anti-war movements, for Ahrens it was the more personal politics of the gay rights and feminist movements that led her into left-wing activism. After struggling to come to terms with her identity as a lesbian and several failed relationships with women, Ahrens entered a state of deep depression triggered by the death of a particularly close grandmother. Seeking therapy, Ahrens like so many gay men and lesbians of the time, was told her sexual orientation was a personality disorder akin to alcoholism and drug addiction which could be "cured" with therapy.[143]

Gradually, Ahrens moved into a growing circle of progressive clergy and psychiatrists who sought to combat the stigmatization of homosexuality and help gays and lesbians accept and celebrate themselves. Ahrens thus progressed through the 1970s with a renewed sense of confidence and commitment to political and social change. In 1971, Ahrens moved to Austin, Texas with a new lover and got involved with the anti-war movement and Austin's fast-growing feminist/lesbian community, including one of

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[142] Interview with Lois Ahrens, December 8, 1996.

[143] *Ibid.*

the nation's first battered women's shelters. Of all her years of activism, Ahrens remembers the 1970s most fondly as the time of the most radical and exhilarating social change, a time when women, gays and lesbians made their greatest strides.[144]

In 1980, Ahrens moved to Northampton and got involved with the local Necessities/*Necessidades* and other women's groups. Coming from the veteran Austin feminist movement, Ahrens found the incipient Northampton feminist movement "unsophisticated" and full of "separatist crap" and stuck at a "terminally early stage".[145] Disillusioned with Northampton's militant style of feminism, Ahrens moved into the freeze movement and produced a successful local play, "Handy Dandy", which dealt with the nuclear arms race. Just as many women in the 1960s and early 1970s moved from the anti-war movement into the feminist movement, in the 1980s many like Julie Rappaport and Lois Ahrens moved from feminist activism into more broad-based political activism. Shortly after moving to Northampton, Ahrens was scooped into the Central American solidarity movement by what she describes as the "iron jaws" of Frances Crowe, who discerned in Ahrens a potentially invaluable recruit for the movement. As Ahrens learned more about U.S. policy in Central America, she began to devote more and more time to the movement, including the material aid campaigns and committing civil disobedience during the massive 1985 anti-embargo protests. Unlike many in the solidarity movement, who had "country affinities" (for instance, Julie Rappaport felt an affinity for Guatemala), Ahrens always described her "affinity country" as the United States and evinced a certain skepticism toward the Sandinistas

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[144] *Ibid.*

[145] *Ibid.*

and other revolutionaries who she felt were often infected with a coercive *machismo*. Considering herself less naïve than some of the more ardent supporters of Central American revolutionaries, Ahrens focused on the complicity of U.S. policy in the region's hardships and in personalizing the victims of war and poverty. It was Ahrens' idea to circulate Polaroid photos of ordinary Salvadorans during local material aid campaigns. Ahrens told one local newspaper, "If people do give something, it tends to make people more connected to the situation."[146] On another occasion, Ahrens extolled the virtues of local activism, stating, "If people see their next door neighbor, their teacher, their doctor expressing their opinion in a public way, it might encourage them to be more open."[147] For Ahrens, as for Rappaport, feminism helped shape the personal focus of their activism. For Ahrens, staying the hand of the male batterer was similar to staying the might of the United States against its weaker, impoverished neighbors to the south.

From this background, Ahrens girded herself in 1989 for a two and a half week trip to Central America. Ahrens spent seven days in El Salvador and eleven days in Nicaragua. In El Salvador, Ahrens took part in a practice known as "accompaniment" in which internationalists would "accompany" threatened Salvadorans and hope thereby to deter their abduction or murder. Upon returning, Ahrens, like Rappaport, sought to share her experiences with local Massachusetts residents. To one local reporter Ahrens offered the following observations on El Salvador after nine brutal years of war: "While there isn't mass slaughter [like the early 1980s] there are incredible amounts of people being

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[146] *Ibid.*

[147] *Ibid.*

killed, tortured and kidnapped every day. It's like Nazi Germany except potentially everybody is a Jew."[148] Shortly after Ahrens' visit, El Salvador was again front-page news as the FMLN unleashed another "Final Offensive" in which the guerrilla army entered sections of the capital, San Salvador. During the offensive, pro-government death squads unleashed a wave of terror, which included the widely publicized murder of three Jesuits, their housekeeper and her young daughter. The death squads not only murdered the Jesuits but also meticulously removed their brains from their skulls in a symbolic act, which spoke volumes about the mentality of the Salvadoran right.[149]

Although numerous internationalists traveled to El Salvador (and a smaller number to Guatemala) during the 1980s, the most popular destination for U.S. internationalists remained revolutionary Nicaragua. Although many internationalists did not support the Sandinista government wholeheartedly, many others found in Nicaragua an opportunity to go beyond opposing U.S. policy in the region to actually becoming part of a revolutionary effort to create a new society. One of the many Massachusetts activists drawn to Nicaragua in search of deeper commitment to radical principles and personal fulfillment was University of Massachusetts, Amherst philosophy professor John Brentlinger. A self-described small-m "marxist and atheist", Brentlinger embraced a deep humanism that often seemed to verge on the spiritual as he sought what he described as "the sacred" in a secular world. "Philosophy", wrote Brentlinger, "... should move away from the old task of thinking about the self and the world – as if these are finished and there to be known – and toward the task of creative activity and work

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[148] Valley Advocate, August 28, 1989.

[149] Interview with Lois Ahrens, December 8, 1996; LeoGrande, 569-74.

toward *remaking* the self and the world. It seemed to me that in Nicaragua this work was happening and that it was neeessary to join in... There was a vision I wanted to hold onto, to bring back and transplant: the realization that people can take control of their lives and change the course of history."[150]

Between 1985 and 1992, Brentlinger made six trips to Nicaragua each of several months duration. From Nicaragua, Brentlinger wrote, "Many North Americans who come here say they oppose U.S. policies against Nicaragua but do not support the Sandinistas, while I *do*. I came here with a positive attitude and it continues to grow stronger. When I had personal encounters with right-wing critics of the Sandinistas, I sometimes wondered if I too much identified myself as a supporter of the revolution to be a responsible observer."[151] Despite these reservations, Brentlinger recounted his experienees in a book entitled The Best of What We Are: Reflections on the Nicaraguan Revolution, a collection of essays, journal entries and photographs that documents daily life in Nicaragua and which balances the author's idealism with realistic descriptions of daily life that do not shy away from showing the Sandinistas or the revolution in a negative light.

Brentlinger first arrived in Nicaragua in the spring of 1985, shortly after Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega's ill-timed trip to the Soviet Union and the imposition of the economic embargo on Nicaragua by President Ronald Reagan. On his first day in Managua, Brentlinger was startled to find what he described as "shocking

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[150] Brentlinger, 68.

[151] *Ibid.*, 41.

poverty".[152] Only hours into his stay he was robbed.[153] But Brentlinger soon settled in for an extended stay, befriending numerous Nicaraguans and speaking to many with very different views of the Sandinistas and the revolution. During his many visits, Brentlinger became more familiar with the land and its people, traveling from urban Managua to remote rural areas, spending time in hotbeds of support for the Sandinistas such as Condega, others sympathetic to the contras such as Matagalpa, and towns in between such as Yali and Jinotega. Brentlinger's travels came during the latter half of the decade, as the contra war, U.S. embargo, and Sandinista mistakes had begun to sap the revolutionary enthusiasm of the first half of the decade when the Sandinistas won international acclaim for their early, successful literacy and inoculation campaigns and claimed over 60% of the vote in the internationally monitored 1984 elections. The Nicaragua Brentlinger witnessed was one increasingly exhausted with daily hardships such as scarcity, empty store shelves, cuts in social programs, escalating draft calls, draft evasion, tightened social control by the government, flagging revolutionary ardor among large sections of a war-weary population and dogged determination to carry forth the revolutionary struggle by others.

In The Best of What We Are, Brentlinger eloquently evokes the appeal of the Sandinista revolution for U.S. radicals. Writes Brentlinger, "the decision to help a foreign country with its revolution looks romantic and quixotic. In the States, I often have the sense of floating in a huge becalmed ocean. Most people do not believe in change. The privileged white majority is complacent and self-indulgent, the poor,

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[152] *Ibid.*, 17.

[153] *Ibid.*, 18.

disenfranchised minorities seem despairing. The left is small and fragmented."[154] By contrast, Brentlinger writes, "Revolution to Nicaraguans was not a political spectacle or a media event. It was their life… I was made to feel I was part of this revolution that I had a role to play. I was someone the revolution needed in its struggle to survive. This was hard to resist. I would do anything I could for them. I could write about them, and do my bit toward reducing the ignorance and misconceptions. I could try to involve others and raise money for material aid. I could go back and strengthen in a small way the bonds between them and us."[155]

Like Brentlinger, many internationalists sought in Nicaragua the promise of community, of brotherhood and sisterhood in a transcendent endeavor. In Nicaragua, writes Brentlinger, "Revolutionary spirit breaks down walls that separate us, that hide misery from us, that protect us by excluding those who are in need."[156] Brentlinger sees many analogies between revolution and religion. Brentlinger describes twentieth century radicals like the Sandinista's namesake, Augusto Cesar Sandino, as akin to the ancient Hebrew prophets and their jeremiads against corruption and injustice. "The prophet like the revolutionary," writes Brentlinger, "has a sense of connectedness that breaks down barriers created by a system of exploitation… Sandino is a modern prophet."[157]

Despite Brentlinger's compelling articulation of the communal and religious elements that motivated many internationalists, his descriptions of daily life belie the glowing accounts of the Sandinista revolution by more starry-eyed internationalists, as

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[154] *Ibid.*, 67.

[155] *Ibid.*

[156] *Ibid.*, 97.

[157] *Ibid.*

well as the sinister depictions of a "totalitarian dungeon" by the Reagan administration. Brentlinger met Nicaraguans whose lives appeared to be very positively transformed by the revolution, such as the *campesino* on a cooperative in Corinto who told Brentlinger:

> We all think alike… all members of the cooperative... it is simple. The revolution has taken the power away from the *Somocistas* and given it to the *campesinos*. I used to work for Somoza… I had to take what they offered me. Sometimes I made nothing… The big difference [now] is we own land. We have credit at the bank and can build a house for anyone who will move here.[158]

In Managua, Brentlinger spoke frequently with a middle-class woman named Norma who praised the impact of the revolution on women while decrying the ongoing sexism in Nicaraguan society. Norma informed Brentlinger,

> The revolution builds more schools and needs more teachers. It builds health centers and needs more nurses and doctors. The revolution greatly increases the demand for all kinds of workers. And because of our strength and independence, we Nicaraguan women are ready to study and improve ourselves. We need this revolution. We identify with it.[159]

Yet, Norma explained to Brentlinger, as has been the case with many leftist revolutions in the twentieth century, *machismo* and sexism persisted. According to Brentlinger, "The Sandinista ideology of complete equality for women was achieved at a relatively high level during the revolutionary struggle and after, *in contexts where women were needed for certain tasks*... Yet Nicaraguan men, including many Sandinistas, continue to lord it over the women they work with, and continue to expect women to serve them in the house, because they don't consider equality in these areas to be a revolutionary necessity."[160]

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[158] *Ibid.*, 251.

[159] *Ibid.*, 143.

[160] *Ibid.*, 151.

Brentlinger is candid about the many Nicaraguans he encounters who are critical of the Sandinistas. In Managua, Brentlinger met a working class man who when asked about the impact of the revolution on the poor, retorts, "They [the poor] are still poor, it hasn't changed. Aren't there poor people in the United States? There's always poor people. But they [the Sandinistas] want to make everyone poor like in Cuba?"[161] Brentlinger responded, "I've been to Cuba. In Cuba, everyone has enough to eat and they have the best health care, the best education in Latin America. I wouldn't say they are poor."[162] The Managuan in turn replied, "I like freedom, I want to be able to work and buy what I want. They don't have freedom in Cuba."[163] Throughout his travels, Brentlinger meets Nicaraguans who complain about shortages, the draft, and Sandinista repression of outspoken critics. In the north, Brentlinger was surprised to meet Nicaraguans openly supportive of the U.S.-backed contras and recounts these experiences candidly, even developing a certain sympathy for the *campesinos* among the contras. Of the group so demonized by the U.S. left due to their egregious human rights record, Brentlinger states, "I began to lose my image of the contras as the other."[164]

Between those who openly supported the revolution and those who openly opposed it, Brentlinger found many more nuanced attitudes during his time in Nicaragua. In one poignant account, Brentlinger describes one of the increasing number of funerals occurring throughout Nicaragua in the late 1980s, in which revolutionary

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[161] *Ibid.*, 41.

[162] *Ibid.*, 42.

[163] *Ibid.*

[164] *Ibid.*, 235.

rhetoric increasingly rang hollow against the painful realities of a seemingly interminable war:

> The family sat together on a raised grave. The father, a fat, kindly seeming man, looked straight ahead with a frown, his arm around the mother. The boy's brothers and sisters sat looking out at nothing. A young man stood by the casket and read a short poem and a statement in a strong, loud voice: "With this death we affirm again, yet again, our commitment to defend Nicaragua from the counterrevolution, and we affirm again, yet again, our unity with the Sandinista National Liberation Front. *Patria Libre*," he shouted, and a few answered, "*O Morir*." After a silence, a man near the grave said, "I have to say you are not speaking for this boy. He had no ideology. He was a boy who died for his country, that is all." After a moment the young man responded again by shouting again, "*Patria Libre*." No one answered, "*O Morir*."[165]

Brentlinger also describes the impact of the ubiquitous internationalists roaming through Nicaragua in the 1980s. His work describes West German work brigades, young Basque radicals working on a cooperative farm and many more North Americans criss-crossing the country. Brentlinger witnessed positive contributions, misplaced idealism and even a certain *gringo* condescension. Although many internationalist projects, like Ben Linder's electric generators, actually improved real Nicaraguans' lives, in other cases internationalists missed the mark, as was the case with a bread oven built by a West German work brigade in a mountain area where the *campesinos* ate tortillas and the oven lay dormant. Often, internationalists, especially those who remained only a short time, viewed the revolution with rose-tinted glasses that missed the nuances and complexities of the Nicaraguan revolution. One *campesino* in the rural north confided to Brentlinger, "Sometimes internationalists come here and talk to people, but the people

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[165] *Ibid.*, 222.

just tell them what they want to hear, not what they really think. They won't talk to a stranger – they are very independent and suspicious."[166]

Another problem Brentlinger observed was reminiscent of experiences of northern civil rights workers in the Deep South during the 1960s, where they often experienced a deferential attitude from local blacks. The work of the internationalists, Brentlinger observes, while well intentioned, would often "perpetuate the hierarchical relations they are hoping to overcome."[167] Many internationalists unintentionally perpetuated a *caudillo* like relationship with the peasants by setting conditions on the use of material aid and becoming bossy on construction projects. According to Brentlinger, "We internationalists think we are different – we are conscious of this imperialist history and actively reject its racist assumptions. Yet we are not different in one respect: we possess and control resources that others do not, because we belong to the oppressor societies... It is sharing the leftovers from the table of imperialism."[168]

Despite his criticisms of the Sandinistas, internationalists and himself, Brentlinger remained committed to the Nicaraguan revolution and people (he was one of the few internationalists who returned to Nicaragua after the Sandinistas' fall from power). If the revolution did not live up to the most uncritical accounts of supporters, neither did it match the highly negative accounts in most of the U.S. press and media. Brentlinger writes:

> Many Nicaraguans have said to me, "When you go back to the United States tell what it is like here, so they will know our reality." Others have

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[166] *Ibid.*, 226.

[167] *Ibid.*, 319.

[168] *Ibid.*

> said, "You foreigners don't see what is really happening. The Sandinistas lie to you, and the people are afraid to say what they think." I have read so many criticisms of the government and heard so many people talk freely in Nicaragua that I don't believe anyone there is afraid to speak out.... When I open a magazine on the flight home, like *Time* or *Newsweek*, I enter a world whose image of Nicaragua is so foreign to what I have seen that my experience feels in danger of being obliterated, or reduced to the idiosyncratic perspective of some middle-aged hippie "fellow traveler".[169]

Upon returning to the United States, Massachusetts internationalists like John Brentlinger, Lois Ahrens and Julie Rappaport sought to share their experiences with Bay State audiences and thereby convey the complexities of the region and counter the stereotypes which dominated the U.S. debate on Central America, especially in the mainstream media and in Washington. Like many internationalists from around the United States and the world, Brentlinger, Ahrens and Rappaport, seeking to work for change in Central America, found themselves and their views transformed by the realities they encountered. Beyond offering alternative perspectives on the region, providing material aid, and helping with harvest work and literacy and health campaigns, by their presence the internationalists were seen as an embarrassment to the Reagan administration. Further, given the outcry that had accompanied the murders of Ita Ford, Dorothy Kazel, Maura Clark, Jean Donovan and Benjamin Linder, the prospect of numerous U.S. citizens dying in a direct U.S. invasion of El Salvador or Nicaragua was not one the administration would have relished. Thus, the internationalists, by their presence, acted as a deterrent to an expanded and more direct U.S. military role in the region.

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[169] *Ibid.*, 267.

The Solidarity Movement Under Surveillance

In 1987 it was revealed that the F.B.I. had conducted widespread infiltration and surveillance of the solidarity movement throughout the 1980s, centered on the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) and the Maryknoll Order. Beyond secret surveillance, internationalists often complained of unfriendly F.B.I. interrogations upon returning to the United States. Conservatives defended the investigations, arguing that the two organizations acted as front groups for the FMLN; however, with memories of COINTELPRO during the 1960s and the Church Committee revelations of other F.B.I. and C.I.A. abuses in the mid-1970s, numerous lawyers, journalists, liberal politicians and activists were alarmed at what appeared to be a resurgence of F.B.I. targeting of dissent under the Reagan administration.[170] Lois Ahrens of the Central American Working Group in Northampton, upon learning of the F.B.I. probe into the solidarity movement, decided out of curiosity to do a routine Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for her files.[171] Ahrens was stunned when she learned that the F.B.I. indeed had a file on her, but that they would not release it "for reasons of national security." Finally, with the assistance of the local American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Ahrens filed suit against the F.B.I. to obtain her files. After more delay and obstructions, in 1990, the F.B.I. finally released Ahrens' twelve page file which had so many redactions (black outs) that the only tangible information Ahrens could glean from the file was the F.B.I.'s general source of information: a "confidential

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[170] Gary Stern, The FBI's Misguided Probe of CISPES, The Center for National Security Studies, Report No. 11, June 1988.

[171] Interview with Lois Ahrens, December 8, 1996.

source who has furnished reliable information in the past." Outraged, Ahrens pressed on with her suit for full release of her files.[172]

In 1990, the case came before U.S. magistrate Michael A. Ponsor of the U.S. District Court in Springfield. The FBI's obstruction carried over into the court. Before allowing Ponsor to review Ahrens file, the FBI insisted Ponsor himself undergo a security check. Ponsor initially denounced the FBI's demand as "superfluous, time consuming and intrusive upon the judiciary."[173] Nevertheless, Ponsor gave ground and though seemingly sympathetic to Ahrens, ultimately ruled against her. Realizing the next judge to hear the case was a conservative even less likely than Ponsor to order the release of her file, Ahrens and the ACLU dropped the suit.[174]

Although Ahrens had initially undertaken the suit out of outrage, she soon realized the case's value in terms of drawing the public's attention to the federal government's spying on political dissent in the United States. In this, Ahrens was successful. Her suit against the FBI drummed up huge local publicity in Western Massachusetts and was even mentioned in a Jack Anderson piece for the Washington Post denouncing FBI surveillance of U.S. citizens.[175] To one local newspaper, Ahrens declared, "The double standard is the glorification of dissent in other countries [especially Eastern Europe] and the denigration of dissent in this country as being unpatriotic."[176] In another local newspaper article on her case, Ahrens observed, "My

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[172] *Ibid.*; Daily Hampshire Gazette, July 11, 1990.

[173] Daily Hampshire Gazette, November 27, 1990.

[174] Interview with Lois Ahrens, December 8, 1996.

[175] Washington Post, undated article, *circa* 1991, Frances Crowe Private Collection.

[176] Daily Hampshire Gazette, January 6, 1990.

political work has included organizing legal demonstrations, public meetings and educational programs, leafleting, arranging petition campaigns, lobbying and working in political campaigns. If there is surveillance on me, how many other people doing this sort of work is the FBI watching?"[177] Frances Crowe declared, "What Lois has been doing is the very highest tradition of democratic action. She's extremely responsible, a true patriot."[178]

Support for Ahrens moved beyond the solidarity movement to the community at large. Denouncing FBI surveillance of a respected and well-liked member of the local community, the moderate Daily Hampshire Gazette in an editorial entitled "Spying on Citizens" concluded, "Before we call for democracy in other parts of the world, let's be sure it's practiced here."[179] Letters of support flooded the local press, and Ahrens herself received letters from local conservatives expressing shock at her being spied upon for the exercise of First Amendment rights. To the Valley Advocate, Ahrens said, "I've never had a wider range of people be more supportive than with this effort to force the FBI's hand, to make them reveal what they do and how they do it."[180] The support for Ahrens, like the sympathy of local jurors for Sam Lovejoy in 1974 and the CIA protestors in 1987, stemmed not just from Western Massachusetts' progressive political climate, but also more broadly from a strong streak of localism which extended as far back as Shay's Rebellion in 1786. Just as Crowe and others in Western Massachusetts recoiled from the efforts of Boston-based activists to centralize the solidarity movement,

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[177] Valley Advocate, January 22, 1990.

[178] Daily Hampshire Gazette, January 6, 1990.

[179] Daily Hampshire Gazette, January 10, 1990.

[180] Valley Advocate, January 22, 1990.

so too did Pioneer Valley residents react viscerally to attempts by distant Washington, D.C. to spy on their local and familiar neighbors.

The Decline of the Solidarity Movement

Despite ongoing Central American solidarity activism in Massachusetts in the late 1980s, the movement, which had struggled to emerge from the shadow of the freeze movement in the early 1980s, saw itself increasingly eclipsed by the anti-apartheid and divestment movements. The anti-apartheid movement, tracing its origin as far back as the Chase Manhattan protests in New York City in 1964, had begun gathering steam in 1985 when a number of campuses across the nation witnessed student building takeovers and construction of makeshift shantytowns in support of the South African liberation struggle. The 1985 anti-apartheid actions coincided with the massive wave of anti-embargo protests that swept the nation in the spring of 1985. The solidarity movement was very supportive of the anti-apartheid movement, and welcomed the opportunity that the focus on U.S. support for the white minority regime afforded for critiquing U.S. cold war policy. Yet as the decade progressed, the anti-apartheid movement continued to gather momentum as events in South Africa increasingly crowded events in Central America off the headlines. Some solidarity activists drifted off into the burgeoning anti-apartheid movement. Lois Ahrens felt somewhat betrayed when in 1985, Frances Crowe, who had played such a crucial role in recruiting her into the solidarity movement, shifted her focus to the movement against apartheid (throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Crowe repeatedly shifted her interest to incipient movements, acting, in many ways, unwittingly

as a fairly accurate bellwether for the rise and decline of the decades' successive movements.)[181]

Although the rising tide of anti-apartheid activism in part accounted for the solidarity movement's slow decline, more than anything it was the gradual de-escalation of cold war tensions ushered in by Mikhail Gorbachev and the negotiated end of the region's civil wars in the early 1990s which marked the end of the solidarity movement. For many solidarity activists, the most important event occurred in 1990 when the unthinkable occurred – the electoral defeat of Daniel Ortega and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua to their old foe, Violeta Chamorro and the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO) just at the time when the contra war had all but ended, marking the seeming victory of the Sandinistas over a decade of U.S.-backed counterrevolution. U.S. newspapers predicted a Sandinista victory in the internationally monitored election, and the new Bush administration seemed resigned to co-existence with the leftist government in Nicaragua. Thus, the defeat, in which the Sandinistas received a little over 42% of the vote to UNO's 58%, sent shock waves through the movement.[182] The demoralization and disillusionment following the Sandinista defeat ranks the event with other low points for the U.S. left in the twentieth century such as the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939, Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin's crimes at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956 and the forty-nine state re-election of Richard Nixon in 1972. Across Nicaragua, internationalists packed up their backpacks and began a mass exodus out of what for the better part of a decade had been a Mecca to the radical left.

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[181] Interview with Lois Ahrens, December 8, 1996.

[182] New York Times, February 26, 1990.

Among the crestfallen activists was Frances Crowe, who recalled, "People were really sad, let down. Maybe the Sandinistas made some mistakes by going too vigorously."[183] Julie Rappaport was more defiant, viewing the Sandinista defeat as the result of the contra war making it impossible to fulfill the promises of the revolution, seeing the Sandinista defeat as another example of "the goddamn U.S. just needing to get its way. It made me nuts!"[184] Lois Ahrens was introspective:

> After the election in Nicaragua, I mean I remember the day of that election, I remember talking to this friend of mine on the phone who'd been working in Esteli [Nicaragua] ... we were crying... we were on the phone crying. We were shocked... we were crushed. How could this have happened compared to what we thought was going on, what we had been told was going on, what we thought we saw was going on? In that way... I was much more of an unquestioning believer than I thought I was. I thought I had some critical distance from what was going on [and] that really shook me up.[185]

John Brentlinger wrote of the day:

> I was in Massachusetts the day the Sandinistas lost the election to UNO: February 25, 1990, ten years and eight months after the triumph of the revolution... My friends and I were taken by surprise. The polls consistently showed a strong Sandinista majority, and we thought anyway that the UNO coalition was such a bizarre collection of political tendencies that it couldn't have much credibility in Nicaragua. We had already circulated posters and fliers and sold tickets for a Sandinista victory dance. We held the dance, but we also held gatherings in friends' houses to talk about our shock and dismay and how to react.[186]

Brentlinger tried to be optimistic, noting that with the Sandinistas in opposition, Nicaragua could never slide back to the days of Somoza and that millions of poor Nicaraguans who supported them would still have a voice even in a more conservative

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[183] Interview with Frances Crowe, December 3, 1996.

[184] Interview with Julie Rappaport, December 10, 1996.

[185] Interview with Lois Ahrens, December 8, 1996.

[186] Brentlinger, 285.

Nicaragua. Unlike most internationalists, Brentlinger's bond with the Nicaraguan people survived the defeat of the Sandinistas and the activist continued to visit the country throughout the 1990s.

In the early 1990s, the civil war in El Salvador came to a negotiated end leaving a wasteland of death and destruction beyond even that experienced in Nicaragua. Some estimates put the dead from El Salvador's civil war as high as 60,000. In national elections, the FMLN-FDR won a minority of seats in the Salvadoran legislature for the first time in El Salvador's history. The leftist forces failure to win a majority was less devastating than the Sandinista's defeat in Nicaragua in that the FMLN-FDR had pretty much abandoned the hope of revolutionary triumph as early as 1982 when the civil war became mired in stalemate and had committed itself to a position of a negotiated end to the war. In the wake of the United Nations brokered peace, a U.N. Truth and Reconciliation Commission was set up to investigate the abuses of the previous decade. The worse charges of atrocities against the Salvadoran government were found to be accurate, as well as charges that the U.S. administration had actively worked to cover up massacres such as the 1981 Army massacre at El Mozote, and that the murder of Ita Ford, Maura Clarke, Dorothy Kazel and Jean Donovan had been ordered by high ranking officers in the Salvadoran National Guard.[187]

In the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the proclamation of victory in the cold war by the United States, the left suffered another blow, although few identified with Soviet-style communism. Where did the decline of revolutionary

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[187] LeoGrande, 575-7.

movements in Central America leave solidarity activists and the left, asked John Brentlinger in The Best of What We Are?:

> The question is made more difficult by the collapse of the so-called socialist regimes in Europe, who gave so much economic support and encouragement to Nicaragua and other liberation struggles in Latin America, as well as a context of larger meaning. The world socialist movement, such as it was, for which Nicaragua's revolution signaled a new opening in Latin America and a qualitatively higher form of democracy in the evolution of socialist societies, now seems as devastated as Nicaragua itself. Marxism teaches that hope should base itself on objective conditions. Where is hope to find its way?[188]

Despite the left's disillusionment at the failure to realize its highest dreams in the 1980s, the impact of the solidarity movement on U.S. politics in the 1980s was immense, far greater than generally credited. By keeping the specter of Vietnam alive, the solidarity movement helped re-invigorate liberal opposition to the Reagan administration's foreign policy, especially in Massachusetts, where the state's congressional delegation, alongside its liberal governor, transformed the Bay State into the nation's most solid political block of opposition to Reagan's interventionist policies in Central America. Throughout the 1980s, Tip O'Neill, Ted Kennedy, Gerry Studds, John Kerry, Michael Dukakis, and Republican Silvio Conte continued to question the administration's policy, keep the issue of human rights alive and oppose any sign of direct U.S. military involvement. It was the Reagan administration's illegal circumvention of Massachusetts' Democratic Congressman Edward Boland's 1982 amendment prohibiting military aid to the Nicaraguan contras, which led to the Iran-Contra Affair. Just as in many ways U.S. policy in Vietnam and the anti-war movement had set in motion the events that led to Watergate, so too in the 1980s, the Reagan administration's obsession with fighting the cold war in Central America, and the

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[188] Brentlinger, 2-3.

growing opposition to that policy, led to the chain of events that culminated in the biggest political scandal of the Reagan era.

CHAPTER VI

MASSACHUSETTS POLITICS AND CENTRAL AMERICA, 1979-1990

Introduction: A Massachusetts Congressman in Nicaragua, January 1980

In mid-December of 1979, Jim Fairchild and George Allen, staff assistants to the House Appropriations Committee, wrote a letter to Representative Silvio Conte, the moderate Republican from western Massachusetts and ranking Republican on the Foreign Operations Subcommittee, concerning an upcoming fact finding trip to Nicaragua. Just months into the Sandinista-led revolution that toppled Anastasio Somoza, the Carter administration was seeking to influence the direction of the new government through U.S. economic aid tailored to strengthen the Nicaraguan private sector and promote political pluralism. Carter proposed "reprogramming" (transferring already appropriated funds from one country to another) $75 million to Nicaragua, thereby re-instituting aid that had been cut in the waning days of the Somoza dictatorship. Fairchild and Allen wrote Conte that during his trip he should focus on: 1) who was in charge in Nicaragua; 2) the status of the economy; 3) who would administer U.S. aid; 4) whom the aid would benefit; and 5) the extent of Soviet and Cuban influence in Nicaragua and what threat that might pose to the United States and the region. The staffers concluded: "Since action on this [aid] request will be based mainly on political impressions of the new government, personal observations would be helpful in forming a position on the issue. We prepare to travel to Nicaragua on or about January

2, 1980, to discuss the situation with United States and Nicaraguan officials and to observe first hand the physical, economic and political results of the revolution there."[1]

On January 3, the western Massachusetts Republican began his seven-day trip to Nicaragua. Throughout his stay, Conte jotted down his impressions on a yellow-lined notepad. What first struck the congressman was the extent of the damage to Managua and the surrounding countryside. Assessing the political situation, Conte scribbled on his pad, "S[andinistas] enjoy 90-95% popular support – definitely in command"; "S[andinistas] moving toward total control"; "moderates privately nervous". Regarding the rebel army that had recently deposed Somoza, Conte jotted down, "S[andinista] Army is the Army" and that their "Present equipment would delight the American Legion or a World War II buff."[2]

Conte witnessed a Nicaragua still swept up in revolutionary fervor and optimism. He observed that the Sandinistas' highly touted literacy campaign was immensely popular, that many captured members of Somoza's despised National Guard had been freed, that the Sandinistas stayed true to their promise of no executions, and that radio and television aired criticisms of the new government with relative freedom. Although relations with the Sandinista dominated government were often strained, opposition political parties nevertheless operated openly.[3]

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[1] Jim Fairchild and George Allen to Silvio O. Conte (hereinafter "SOC"), "Re: Nicaraguan Travel Request", December 13, 1979. "Silvio O. Conte Congressional Papers", Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "Nicaragua – Contra Aid, 1980-86", MS 371, Subgroup II , Special Collections and Archives, W.E.B. Dubois Library, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. (Hereinafter cited as SOC Papers.)

[2] SOC, Handwritten notes, January 3, 1980. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "Nicaragua: Contra Aid, 1980-86", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[3] *Ibid.*

Conte's verdict on Cuban-Soviet influence was mixed, however; Conte noted that the "Russians refused aid" and "Nicaragua has few alternatives [to working with the United States] — Russia and Cuba will not spend money — [the Sandinistas] could tighten belts even further based on popular support, how long is questionable." Indeed, given the fact that Nicaragua's prime exports, such as cattle and coffee, did not enjoy much demand in the communist bloc, access to U.S. markets was an imperative for the new government, which gave the United States some influence over it. But the long history of U.S. intervention in Nicaraguan affairs played a strong role in the Sandinistas' brand of nationalism and many of its members were Marxists. Although the Soviet Union seemed unwilling to bankroll the Nicaraguan revolution, Conte did observe a large Cuban presence in the country. In 1978, Fidel Castro had played a significant role as mediator between the three guerrilla factions that eventually unified as the FSLN, and although Cuban arms shipments were meager, Cuban advisors abounded. The Cubans advised the Sandinistas to move in a moderate direction. Wrote Conte in his memo pad, "Cuba urging moderation, but 1,200 [Cuban] teachers, 1,000 med[ical personnel], and 300–600 'others' (communications, etc.) present and 600 Nic[araguan] kids in Cuba — [The Cubans were] maybe too visible — Nicaraguan people tell Cuban jokes."[4]

Assessing all he had seen, Conte concluded, "We have no choice — support [the new government] or get out." Although "concerned" about the Sandinista trend toward concentrating power and the Cuban presence, Conte decided to give a "firm recommendation to grant the loan."[5]

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[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Ibid.*

Back in Washington, D.C., before the Foreign Operations Subcommittee, Conte outlined the dilemma he and the other members of the committee faced: "What this committee must decide is, will this aid help the United States to gain access and influence in the direction of Nicaraguan development, or will this aid assist the eventual economic stability for a Marxist dictatorship? Even for those of us who will probably gamble and vote for this aid, it is a difficult question." Despite these reservations, the committee voted to approve the $70 million loan requested by the Carter administration, with 60% earmarked for the Nicaraguan private sector.[6]

The Carter administration's *modus vivendi* with Nicaragua unraveled in the final days of the administration, when reports of Nicaraguan arms shipments to the FMLN in El Salvador during their "Final Offensive" of January 1981 led the administration to cut U.S. aid to Nicaragua. By the end of 1981 the new Reagan administration made the cutoff permanent and began its secret operations to destabilize the Nicaraguan government. Events in Nicaragua were quickly overshadowed by developments in El Salvador, which for the next few years became the frontline in the Reagan administration's anti-communist policies in Central America.[7]

For Silvio Conte, who had generally felt comfortable with the Carter administration's approach to Central America, the hard right turn of the incoming Republican administration posed some dilemmas. Although Conte shared Reagan's stated goal of containing communism in Central America, he nevertheless remained

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[6] SOC, Draft Statement, "Nicaragua and Honduras Supplemental, FY 1980", Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "Nicaragua – Contra Aid, 1980-86", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[7] William LeoGrande, Our Own Backyard: The United States in Central America, 1977-1992 (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998) 29-32, 69.

committed to the principle of promoting human rights in the region, a policy from which the new administration emphatically departed with its highly public firing of Ambassador Robert White. Further, Conte shared the concern of many that Reagan's new, hard-line policy could lead to the introduction of U.S. troops in the region, something he adamantly opposed. Conte was further torn by his dual loyalties: one to his party which had just reclaimed the White House and was moving to the right; another to his constituency in the Massachusetts First District, which was fast becoming a hotbed of activism and moving to the left. Throughout the 1980s, Conte would be increasingly caught in these crosscurrents. As Activist Lois Ahrens recalled of the solidarity movement's relationship with Silvio Conte, "We were on his ass."[8]

The Republican: Silvio Conte, El Salvador and Human Rights

Silvio Conte was shocked to learn in early December 1980 of the murders of Ita Ford, Maura Clarke, Dorothy Kazel and Jean Donovan. For Conte, a Catholic, the fact that three of the women were nuns made the atrocity especially abhorrent. Responding to a letter about the murders from Rev. Thomas W. Olcott of the Council of Churches of Greater Springfield, Conte outlined his position on human rights in El Salvador:

> I strongly supported the Carter administration's decision to suspend military assistance to El Salvador following the savage murders of American missionary workers. It has been my view that barring massive outside intervention, resumption of such assistance should be contingent upon a full and complete investigation of the recent killings of innocent Americans, an abatement of violence, the construction of needed social and economic reforms and a moderation of extremist elements within the *junta*. I have felt that renewed military assistance at this time could exacerbate divisions within El Salvador, contribute to the worsening

[8] Interview with Lois Ahrens, December 1996.

violence and dangerously escalate U.S. involvement in what is essentially an internal struggle within that strife torn country.[9]

As Conte responded to constituents in January 1981, events in El Salvador were spiraling out of control. The Salvadoran right, anticipating the end of the Carter human rights policy, had dramatically escalated its violence after the U.S. election in November. Death squad killings reached a crescendo in January, including two more U.S. citizens, Michael Hammer and Mark Pearlman, members of the AFL-CIO affiliated Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), an organization dedicated to promoting non-communist unions in Latin America. Pearlman and Hammer had been meeting with one of the few remaining moderates of the *junta*, Jose Rodelfo Viera on an Agency for International Development (AID) project to help Salvadoran peasants set up cooperatives. On January 3, 1981 masked paramilitaries burst into the restaurant where Pearlman, Hammer and Viera were meeting and sprayed the three with machine gun fire.[10]

As right-wing violence grew, the FMLN, likewise considering the implications of Reagan's impending inauguration, launched its "Final Offensive", hoping to topple the Salvadoran government before Reagan took office. The strength of the leftist offensive took many by surprise, and the Carter administration responded by re-instating emergency military aid to El Salvador.[11] Conte assured constituents he would continue to oppose such aid. In a reply to State Representative John Olver, Conte wrote, "... I

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[9] SOC to Ray Miller and Rev. Thomas W. Olcott, January 19, 1981. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Letters and Statements", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[10] LeoGrande, 66-7.

[11] *Ibid.*, 69-70, 95.

opposed the [Carter] Administration's decision of January 14 to resume military aid to El Salvador. My views were conveyed by telephone to both the White House and the State Department as soon as news of the impending decision reached my office... these views were reiterated in a telegram to President Carter on January 16..."[12] Conte promised to go even further in the coming session:

> Under the new Reagan Administration I am co-sponsoring legislation which would suspend military assistance to El Salvador pending hearings in the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on progress in the investigation of the murders of the six Americans, and on ways to strengthen forces of moderation in El Salvador to bring about reforms and to achieve a negotiated settlement.[13]

Conte's hard-line began to soften by March 1981. The Reagan administration had just authorized $20 million in emergency aid to El Salvador and now sought an additional $5 million in reprogrammed aid from the Foreign Operations Subcommittee.[14] As the ranking Republican on the Democratically controlled committee, Conte did not relish casting what would have been the deciding vote against the new Republican president. Although relatively small, the $5 million was a highly symbolic early test for the new administration's policy in El Salvador. Conte cast the deciding 'yes' vote. Torn, Conte felt compelled to justify his vote at length before the committee on March 24. Conte began with more rigid cold war rhetoric than was customary for the moderate, declaring, "Mr. Chairman, I will vote for approval solely because of my great concern that the failure to support the President and his policy to stand up to international

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[12] SOC to Hon. John Olver, February 17, 1981. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Letters and Statements", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] LeoGrande, 96.

terrorism and aggression would send the wrong signal to the Soviet Union and Cuba which could have adverse repercussions on the United States and its allies around the world."[15] Having staked out common ground with the administration, Conte then qualified his vote in words more in keeping with his human rights concerns:

> However, I do not believe a military solution is the answer to an end in the violence in El Salvador, which remains my major concern. I want to make it absolutely clear to the El Salvadoran government, the Administration, the people of this country and my colleagues in the Congress that I will not support any further military assistance for the government of El Salvador unless and until the investigation of the killings of the Americans in El Salvador late last year has been completed and I have assurances that the El Salvador government will no longer permit its military and security forces to inflict violence on innocent civilians in that country.[16]

Conte's staff prepared for the backlash that was sure to follow his March 24 vote. In a memo entitled, "Speaking Points on El Salvador", Conte and his staff set down responses that would be included in replies to constituents' letters, phone calls and reporters' questions. The "basic position" outlined in the memo was that Conte hoped to build up the Salvadoran center against the extremes of left and right, and that he felt he needed to support the new President on his first major foreign policy test to uphold the administration's credibility around the world. "Given the situation and my basic position, I was torn over which way to vote last week," the memo read.[17] Conte argued that his vote would have had no impact on the larger military aid package: "I was not

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[15] "Remarks of Hon. SOC before the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the Full House Appropriations Committee", March 24, 1981. Series 3c, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Letters and Statements", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] "Speaking Points on El Salvador", *circa* April 1981. Series 3c, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Letters and Statements", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

willing to take this risk [of embarrassing the president] in a vote which would not have any meaningful effect in halting military assistance to El Salvador."

Yet, while arguing his vote would have had no affect on changing administration policy, Conte and his staff simultaneously laid out an argument that asserted his vote would give him influence over future policy: "My vote was justified, both on broad foreign policy grounds in avoiding potentially high costs elsewhere in the world, and in increasing my leverage over the administration and the El Salvadoran government to insist that the violence be reduced and the investigation of the killing of the Americans be completed."[18]

In a section of the memo entitled "If Asked Only", Conte's staff set about finding a response should anyone ask the Congressman about any "inconsistency between cosponsoring H.Con.Res. 67, which calls for a suspension of military assistance and your March 24 vote." If these contradictory positions were raised, Conte was to reply that the $5 million in military aid was for uniforms, vehicles, communications, and patrol boats, which were "defensive" in nature, and he would "not support sending weapons, ammunition or advisors to that country – barring massive outside intervention."[19]

Conte's subtle distinctions were lost on his constituents, who inundated his offices with letters, telegrams and phone calls. "I was shocked and saddened to read of your vote in favor of sending additional military aid to El Salvador," wrote one constituent, "What on earth were you thinking? Was it so long ago that the Vietnam War

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[18] *Ibid.*

[19] *Ibid.*

began under almost the exact circumstances? Have you learned nothing from recent history? Chile, Vietnam, Iran and now El Salvador..."[20]

Then on April 11, local solidarity activists printed an ad in the Daily Hampshire Gazette, entitled, "An Open Letter to Silvio Conte". It addressed Conte stating:

> MR. CONTE you cast the determining vote to send $5,000,000 of additional military aid to the governing terrorists in El Salvador. You said you wanted to send a signal to the Soviets and Cuba and to support the administration. You admitted this went against majority sentiment in your district. But we can't blame the Soviets and Cuba for more than 50 years of oppression in El Salvador, Nicaragua and the rest of Latin America. We bear responsibility for that... We understand your feeling of party loyalty, but in this case it is misplaced. We must cease propping up militarist regimes which rule by terrorism... U.S. Rep. Gerald Studds (D.-Mass.) recently back from an investigating trip to Central America, told your committee, Mr. Conte, that "most of the terrorism in El Salvador has been perpetrated by the forces now receiving U.S. arms training... We are sending to the military in El Salvador a signal that any acts committed in the name of anti-Communism are acts committed with the prestige and power and blessing of the United States..." MR. CONTE, we believe the evidence is overwhelming: The El Salvadoran revolution is supported by the great majority of the people – peasants, church leaders, businessmen and professionals. The army controls the government and paramilitary terrorist forces. The revolution has arisen out of decades of what our own State Department concedes has been "repression, widespread poverty and concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few families."[21]

The ad included a photograph of Maryknoll nuns praying over the bodies of the murdered U.S. churchwomen, with the caption, "El Salvador Government Terrorism."

As the uproar grew Conte went on the offensive. Responding to one constituent, Conte reiterated, "I am convinced that my vote was justified – and is in line with the desires of the majority of the First District – in avoiding potentially high foreign policy

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[20] David J. Hoey to SOC, Received April 24, 1981. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Letters and Statements", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[21] Daily Hampshire Gazette , April 11, 1981.

costs and in increasing my leverage over the El Salvadoran government and the Administration..."[22] In a lengthy letter to Susan Klein-Berndt, the Northampton organizer of the signature ad, Conte wrote that he was "disappointed" with the piece, which he felt distorted his position. Conte again asserted, "I was concerned about misinterpretation that could arise from the failure of Congress to support a new president in his first foreign policy test and which could result in adverse repercussions for the United States and its allies in areas other than El Salvador."[23] Conte also objected to the ad's depiction of him as someone blindly adhering to cold war dogma. Stating that he had long held the region's problems were rooted in a history of poverty, Conte wrote, "To imply I 'Blame the Soviets and Cuba for the past 50 years of aggression in El Salvador'... is a major distortion."[24] Conte then took issue with what he felt was the ad's embrace of the FMLN-FDR as "the forces of tomorrow", stating, "I was surprised to read your claim that 'the evidence is overwhelming' that the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR) is supported by 'the great majority of people.'"[25] (In actuality, the ad stated "The El Salvadoran revolution is supported by the great majority of the people.") Conte then referred to recent discussions he had with Salvadoran Archbishop Rivera y Damas, in which the cleric avowed support for Duarte and the moderate elements in the *junta* and declared the left and the right "arch enemies" of the current government. Conte then

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[22] SOC to David J. Hoey, April 27, 1981. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Letters and Statements", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[23] SOC to Susan Klein-Berndt, April 26, 1981. Series 3e, Box, 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Letters and Statements", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] *Ibid.*

embarked on an impassioned defense of Duarte that would gradually cool over the coming years:

> The reasons why you insist upon abandoning President Duarte and the *Junta* – probably the only realistic hope for a democratic government without a massive and protracted civil war – which would mean a resurgence of the extreme right oligarchy, a reversal of land reform progress and increased violence, escape me. It would seem that the qualified support for President Duarte's government given its reforms, the greatest civilian control of any El Salvadoran government in recent history… and it's offers to negotiate with the FDR, conforms with your appeal in your advertisement for an 'identification with the forces of tomorrow.'"[26]

Conte's assertive defense of his March 24 vote did little to mollify his critics in the First District. Letters, telegrams and calls continued to pour into the congressman's offices. Despite the occasional note of support, Conte's advocacy of human rights in El Salvador was being lost amidst the chorus of criticism. Concerned, Conte's staff sought to get the congressman's message out. In an interview with the Daily Hampshire Gazette, Conte aide Bruce Benton insisted the March 24 vote "is not a reversal of Conte's previous stand against military aid" and that the equipment to be purchased was "defensive". Benton argued that Conte would not support weapons or U.S. military advisors, emphasizing, "That's military aid."[27] Benton's efforts at damage control extended to participating in a panel discussion held by the Northampton Committee on El Salvador at the Unitarian Church before an audience of 150. Benton argued the United States needed to support Duarte not just against the leftist rebels, but even more against the extreme right, which frequently threatened to topple the *junta*. A right-wing

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[26] *Ibid.*

[27] Daily Hampshire Gazette, undated newspaper clipping, *circa* April 1981. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Letters and Statements", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

coup, Benton told the group, would lead to violence "far bloodier than anything that has gone on so far."[28]

After the storm over Conte's $5million military aid vote subsided, Conte worked hard to mollify his many angry constituents. In the spring of 1981, Conte voted for the Solarz-Brigham Amendment sponsored by New York Democrats Stephen Solarz and John Bingham, which required the president to certify to Congress every 180 days that five conditions were being met in El Salvador. To receive further congressional military aid for El Salvador, the president needed to certify that the Salvadoran government: 1) was not carrying out "a consistent pattern of gross violation of internationally recognized human rights; 2) was achieving control over the military; 3) making progress in land reform; 4) committed to holding national elections at the earliest date and 5) showing a willingness to negotiate an end to the war. Although the amendment lacked the teeth of a legislative veto and only required the administration to claim progress toward the five stated objectives, the amendment kept El Salvador on the congressional agenda and provided a yardstick by which to measure progress in El Salvador and administration veracity. Proponents further argued that by threatening to stop military aid, the Solarz-Bingham bill provided the administration a tool with which to extract concessions from the recalcitrant Salvadoran government.[29] Conte embraced the Solarz-Bingham amendment, proclaiming, "… I will not vote another nickel until these conditions are

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[28] *Ibid.*

[29] LeoGrande, 130-2.

met."[30] When the administration issued its first certification in early 1982, Conte was skeptical, declaring, "... I was dismayed to learn that the President had certified on January 28 that these five conditions had been complied with. Information as to progress on human rights for El Salvador's citizens, the land reform program, free elections and civilian control over the security and armed forces appears to be ambiguous at best..."[31]

Conte remained committed, however, to seeking to bolster Duarte with non-military aid. In this, Conte disagreed with left-leaning activists in his district who saw the Christian Democrat as an ineffectual façade of civilian rule, which masked the real power of the military and oligarchy so that U.S. aid continued to flow. Yet Conte emphasized that he supported negotiations and not a military victory by either side as the only way out of the crisis. In the fall of 1981, Conte responded to one constituent, "Let me assure you that I continue to support and work for a settlement in El Salvador which would solidify and expand the base of a moderate government, and curb the senseless violence from both the right and left. In my view this requires that the Duarte government demonstrate more flexibility toward the prospect of negotiations with the opposition."[32]

Conte continued to walk the tightrope between the Republican administration and his district in 1982. Upon completion of another Central American fact-finding trip

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[30] SOC. undated statement criticizing the president's January 28, 1982 certification of El Salvador, *circa* January 1982. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Letters and Statements", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] SOC to Margaret G. Holt, October 6, 1981. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Letters and Statements", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

by Appropriations Committee staffer Jim Fairchild, Conte issued the following statement to the Foreign Operations Subcommittee:

> Increased military assistance would risk strengthening repressive elements in the military and security forces. Also, a unilateral withdrawal of all U.S. support from the Duarte government prior to any political settlement would risk the killing of many more innocent civilians and church leaders through a seizure of power by the extreme right and an escalation of fighting by the extreme left. Hence, I reaffirm my position of opposing any increase of military assistance to El Salvador under the present circumstances. However, I continue to support economic and humanitarian assistance to the Duarte government. While support for total withdrawal of U.S. presence from El Salvador may be politically appealing, I must take a responsible position and avoid those steps, which might lead to an increase in the violence in El Salvador.[33]

In the spring of 1982, Mexican President Lopez Portillo set forth a peace initiative in what would be the first of many regional efforts to end the bloodshed in Central America. In 1983, Mexico, Venezuela, and Columbia put forth the Contadoro Peace proposal, which was followed by the peace plan proposed by Costa Rican president Oscar Arias. Many in Congress eagerly embraced these regional efforts. The first effort by President Portillo emboldened Conte, who declared:

> Above all, a major effort is needed to achieve a negotiated, multilateral political settlement in El Salvador. To this end I have sent a letter... to President Reagan expressing my strong support of Mexican President Lopez Portillo's recent peace initiative... I am also an original co-sponsor of H.J.Res. 405, introduced by Congressman Barnes and Solarz, urging the President to press for unconditional negotiations among the major political factions in El Salvador...[34]

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[33] "Statement of U.S. Rep. SOC (R-Mass.) on the Completion of a fact-finding mission in Central America of Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee staff member Jim Fairchild", March 8, 1982. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Letters and Statements", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[34] *Ibid.*

Conte's position distanced him more from the administration, which generally remained skeptical of negotiations. For the administration negotiations meant the limited aim of reaching terms whereby the rebels would put down their arms and participate in government-run elections. The FMLN-FDR stuck to the position that without power sharing and restructuring of the armed forces, conditions would remain unsafe for those on the left. The administration argued that power sharing in affect would allow the FMLN-FDR to "shoot their way to power".[35]

Conte, however, like many of his colleagues and much of the U.S. press and media, was enthusiastic about the Salvadoran elections held in March 1982. In the elections, Duarte's Christian Democrats squared off against a coalition of conservative parties led by the newly formed National Republican Alliance (ARENA), an extreme right-wing party founded by ex-Army Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, a man reputed to have ties to many death squads, and described by Robert White as "a pathological killer". Leftist parties, citing the impossibility of campaigning openly for fear of their lives, boycotted the election and the FMLN sought to disrupt the elections, which they denounced as illegitimate.[36]

In the United States, the elections were hailed as a triumph of democracy, in which voter turnout was unexpectedly high and many Salvadorans braved rebel sabotage and bullets in order to vote (left-liberal periodicals in the United States pointed out that voting was mandatory whereas not voting was a criminal offense.) The results, however, left some like Conte uneasy. A right-wing coalition including ARENA won a narrow

[35] LeoGrande, 189.

[36] *Ibid.*, 48-50; 149-173.

majority and as its first order of business set about dismantling the previous government's modest efforts at land reform. Meanwhile, death squad killings continued unabated and the war dragged on.[37] By early 1983, Conte became more vocal in his criticisms of administration policy. This was due primarily to two causes: an escalating level of constituent pressure and the cases of the murdered U.S. citizens reaching a legal impasse. In the spring of 1983, the always-heavy constituent mail on El Salvador turned into a flood. One assistant sent Conte a memo stating, "The office – and district offices – has been swamped with letters, phone calls and telegrams. All are opposed to further military aid. In recent times, the letters have come outside of the traditional liberal hotbeds of Amherst and Northampton."[38]

As concern from the district made itself felt, the case against the accused murderers of the four U.S. churchwomen ground to a halt. In May of 1981, six members of the Salvadoran National Guard had been arrested as suspects in the women's slayings (one was subsequently ordered released.) Despite compelling ballistic, fingerprint and polygraph evidence obtained by the FBI linking the Guardsmen to the murder, and reports that the guardsmen had acted on orders from higher up, in November 1981 the U.S. Embassy and Salvadoran government declared the investigation at a "dead end".[39] A similar impasse had been reached in the case of AIFLD workers Mark Pearlman and Michael Hammer, despite strong evidence that their deaths had been ordered by two

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[37] *Ibid.* 449-473.

[38] Memo; "Tim to SOC, Re: El Salvador Nuns Case", March 23, 1983, Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Fourth Certification, 1983-84", MS 37, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[39] New York Times, March 17, 1983; New York Times, May 25, 1984.

high ranking military officers and a prominent, wealthy businessman with close ties to D'Aubuisson.[40]

The Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights, which pursued the case in close cooperation with the victims' families, took up the search for justice in the murders of the four U.S. churchwomen. Heading the case for the Lawyers Committee was Michael H. Posner, who publicly declared that the difficulty in prosecuting the case was due to the unwillingness of any Salvadoran judge to hear the case for fear of reprisal by the military. Writing to L. Craig Johnstone of the State Department, Posner declared:

> Lawyers in El Salvador have grave, and probably justified fears that if they become involved in this case their lives may be jeopardized... In part because of these fears, no lawyer appears willing to help conduct a thorough investigation of the possible involvement of higher authorities in ordering the killings or covering them up... [41]

Due largely to the persistent efforts of the Lawyers Committee, U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Deane Hinton pressured the Salvadoran government to re-open the case. Finally, in late November 1982, a Salvadoran court agreed to commence a murder trial of the four accused National Guardsmen. But the courts, backed by the U.S. Embassy, refused to consider evidence that orders for the murders came from higher up the chain of command. Posner complained to Johnstone, "A number... of [Salvadoran] lawyers have stated to us that they do not believe the U.S. Embassy in San Salvador supports a

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[40] New York Times, October 21, 1982.

[41] Michael H. Posner to l. Craig Johnstone, November 30, 1982. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador – Nun Slaying, 1982-1983", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

more thorough investigation of the case."[42] The limited focus of the trial divided the relatives of the victims, some of who denounced them as a "sham".[43]

The renewed case bogged down further in the early spring of 1983 when the Salvadoran judiciary announced that FBI ballistic, fingerprint and polygraph evidence would be inadmissible under Salvadoran law. Without this evidence, the court announced that there was insufficient evidence to try the case.[44] The ruling set off a storm of protest in the United States. During this time, Posner contacted Johnstone at the State Department and inquired whether Conte would "act as a 'good faith broker'", citing the congressman's "[l]ongtime interest in the case" and position of "no more aid till [the case was] resolved." Conte agreed and began corresponding with the Lawyers Committee and receiving regular updates on the case.[45]

Posner appeared at hearings before Conte's Foreign Operations Subcommittee in March 1983 and described the obstacles the Lawyers Committee encountered while pursuing justice for the churchwomen when he last traveled to El Salvador the previous January with William Ford, brother of Ita Ford. Posner described for the committee the "shocking pattern of official indifference, incompetence and ill will" toward the case he encountered from Salvadoran officials.[46] According to Posner, the highest Salvadoran

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[42] *Ibid.*

[43] New York Times, May 25, 1984.

[44] Washington Post, March 17, 1983.

[45] Handwritten notes, Michael H. Posner. Circa February/March 1982. Series 3c, Box 64, folder: "El Salvador: Nun Slayings, 1982-83", MS 371, Subgroup II. SOC Papers.

[46] "El Salvador: The Case of Four U.S. Church Women: Testimony of Michael H. Posner, Executive Director of the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights to the House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations." Series 3c, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Nun Slayings, 1982-83", MS 371, Subgroup II. SOC Papers.

judicial figure, Prosecutor General Dr. Mario Adalberto Rivera "... and his staff are both shockingly uninterested and wholly unprepared for trial... [and]... continue to ignore existing evidence that there were orders from superiors to apprehend the women."[47] Speaking of the judge hearing the case, Posner complained, "Salvadoran judges – those who survive – seem to find ways to avoid bringing homicide charges to trial. As of last summer, we were told that Judge [Bernardo] Rauda [Marcia] had sixty murder cases pending before him and not one had been closed. Each week he inspects five or six bodies – new murders in which no investigation is even opened."[48] Posner concluded his testimony with an impassioned plea to the committee:

> Mr. Chairman, in the two years since the deaths of the four women, their case has taken on a special significance. To be sure, only a narrow parochialism could judge these murders worse or even more important than the tens of thousands of murders of Salvadoran citizens by government forces. But the case of the four churchwomen has come to be symbolic of the brutalities that mark the daily life in El Salvador. These killings (and the murders of the two United States Labor Advisors) have also become symbolic because in a period when 30,000 civilians, including the country's Archbishop, have been murdered, many by government armed forces, only the cases of the North Americans are being investigated. For this reason, the demand to fix responsibility in this case becomes part of a far wider demand, that elementary respect for human life and human rights may be restored and recognized as obligations by those who govern El Salvador.[49]

Outside the hearings, at Posner's request, Conte agreed to contact the Salvadoran Fiscal General Mario Adalberto Rivera about the stalled case. In a formal letter, Conte expressed his concerns to El Salvador's top judicial official:

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[47] *Ibid.*

[48] *Ibid.*

[49] *Ibid.*

> … I am not an expert in Salvadoran law, by any means, but I am concerned about vital evidence apparently ignored and put aside. Progress in this trial was cited by an act of Congress as a criterion for further United States assistance to your country. I realize that you must uphold and enforce the laws of your country, but I urge you to use the powers of your good office to admit this valuable information. The fair and proper conduct of this trial is extremely important to many people in the United States, including myself.[50]

Rivera replied to Conte's letter, "I feel honored to have received from you the letter in which you refer to the case under investigation concerning the death of the American nuns…" Rivera blamed the "formalities" of the Salvadoran justice system for the difficulties in pursuing the case, insisting, "Our investigative system suffers from a certain rigidity."[51]

Conte sought to pressure not only the Salvadoran government but the Reagan administration as well. During the Foreign Operations Subcommittee, Conte politely but firmly confronted Secretary of State George Schultz over the case, declaring, "…[This] single case probably causes you more difficulty in selling [the administration's proposal for additional aid] … than any other issue… The only conclusion I can personally draw is that we haven't got their [the Salvadoran government's] attention on this issue."[52] Schultz, who sought to replace his predecessor Alexander Haig's confrontational style with a more conciliatory approach to Congress, responded to Conte's remarks, "Before I

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[50] SOC to Dr. Mario Adalberto Rivera, Fiscal General, La Republican de El Salvador, March 23, 1983. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Nun Slayings", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[51] Dr. Mario Adalberto Rivera to SOC, June 20, 1983. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Nun Slayings", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[52] Washington Times, March 17, 1983.

can sell you, I have to sell myself. Some of these cases are deeply troubling to me; there just has to be a better job done on it."[53]

In June of 1983, Conte took to the floor of the House of Representatives, and announced his support for a resolution by Massachusetts Democrat Gerry Studds, which added a verdict in the cases of the murdered U.S. citizens to the certification requirements for U.S. military aid to El Salvador. In his most impassioned remarks on the case to date, Conte declared:

> Mr. Speaker, this depressing story of the six brutally murdered Americans is not a new chapter in the unfolding saga of El Salvador. On the contrary, these cases are a recurring story with no conclusion in sight. Maura Clarke, Jean Donovan, Ita Ford, and Dorthoy Kazel were murdered in December of 1980. Michael Kline and John Sullivan were killed in 1981. Two and a half years have passed since these events took place and little measurable progress has been made to resolve the case and bring the guilty to justice. The immediate question everyone must ask is 'why'? ... But there's another question that bothers me even more. How can a close and well-supported ally apparently ignore the cry of outrage by the American public and Congress?[54]

Echoing a point made frequently by the Lawyers Committee and those in the solidarity movement, Conte asked, "If the treatment of this highly publicized and crucial case is any indication of the administration of justice in El Salvador, what chance do *campesinos* have? How can villagers in Morazan or Santa Ana feel secure knowing there is little to prevent indiscriminate murders or larceny?"[55]

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[53] *Ibid.*

[54] Draft: "Remarks of the Hon. SOC in Support of H.R. 1271." Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Fourth Certification, 1983-84", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers. The Studds Amendment on behalf of which Conte spoke, was intended to reinstate the requirement, which had lapsed.

[55] *Ibid.*

Conte's staff sought to amplify the Congressman's new outspokenness for constituents in the First District with press releases. Taking note, the Daily Hampshire Gazette in a piece entitled, "Conte Toughens Stance", summed up Conte's trajectory on El Salvador over the course of the three previous years, stating, "The unresolved murders have been a concern of Conte's since 1981… After coming under fire for casting a subcommittee vote that allowed military aid to continue to El Salvador, Conte promised he would vote for no further aid until the murderers were brought to justice… Nevertheless, yesterday's remarks represent another step by Conte to distance himself from the administration's policy in Central America and to appease constituents who have pressured him since January to stop military aid to El Salvador."[56]

In November of 1983, Conte voted with a majority of Congress to withhold $19 million of a larger military aid package until there was a verdict in the case of the four National Guardsmen accused of the churchwomen's murders. The case was reopened and in May 1984, a five-member jury rendered a guilty verdict in the case of the four Guardsmen, whom the court subsequently sentenced to thirty years (ironically, El Salvador's had no death penalty). An attorney for the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights was ambivalent, telling a reporter for the New York Times, "I don't want to undermine what has happened but almost everything about this case makes me uncomfortable… It's an American show. We – the Lawyers Committee representing the family, members of Congress, the American Embassy, the Justice Department – have nudged them and shoved them every step of the way."[57] Four years

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[56] Daily Hampshire Gazette, June 7, 1983.

[57] New York Times, May 25, 1984.

later, all but one of the convicted Guardsmen admitted to having received orders to kill the churchwomen from high up the military chain of command. Three of the Guardsmen were released later that year.

The Liberal Crusader: Representative Gerry Studds

Silvio Conte's remarks on the floor of the Congress in the spring of 1983 came as a rousing endorsement of an amendment reinstating a verdict in the churchwomen's murder case to the certification requirements for military aid. A verdict had been part of the certification requirements of the Solarz-Bingham amendment but had recently lapsed. The popular amendment to reinstate the verdict requirement was the work of Gerald ("Gerry") E. Studds, a passionate liberal representing the Massachusetts Twelfth District, which encompassed Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. From the outset of the debate on Central America, Studds had emerged as one of the most outspoken critics of Reagan's Central American policies, joining other liberal Democrats such as Michigan's John Conyers, California's Ron Dellums, Maryland's Michael Barnes and Connecticut's Christopher Dodd in leading the opposition to the administration's new direction. As a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Studds was strategically positioned to contest the new policy, and he earned a reputation for challenging the president on both the arms race and Central America.[58]

Studds political views were shaped in the cauldron of the 1960s. After graduating from Yale in 1960, he went directly into the Foreign Service Offices, and then transferred to the staff of President John Kennedy where he remained from late 1962

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[58] LeoGrande, 92, 156-7; Daily Hampshire Gazette, June 7, 1983.

through 1963. In the mid-1960s, Studds went to work as a legislative assistant for New Jersey Democratic Congressman Harrison A. Williams, Jr. and was witness to the mayhem of the 1968 Democratic Convention as a delegate in the Convention Hall. Over the course of the next few years, Studds taught history and served in the Office of the President of the University of Massachusetts. In 1972, Studds won election to Congress from the Twelfth District, a bastion of liberalism in the only state to go for George McGovern. Thereafter, Studds continued to win re-election, even in 1978, when Studds' opponent leveled charges of homosexuality against him. After surviving that challenge, Studds became one of the first openly gay members of Congress.[59]

Studds became an ardent proponent of post-1960s liberalism, which sought to change the cold war policies and ideology that had led the United States into the Vietnam War. His unflagging liberalism remained unchanged after the conservative resurgence of 1980. Relatively secure in his district, Studds did not undergo the doubts and soul searching of many liberals in the demoralizing aftermath of the 1980 election. The election had seen the defeat of such liberal standard bearers as Senators Frank Church and George McGovern, and left the Democrats on the defensive. Observed Massachusetts Senator Paul Tsongas at the time, "The last election changed things. Not only did we lose Democrats and liberals, but those who are left are so weary. Everyone is running for cover from Reagan and the conservative trend."[60] Studds emerged from the debacle zealously committed to rallying liberal opposition to the new administration.

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[59] New York Times, July 15, 1983.

[60] LeoGrande, 92.

Like Silvio Conte, Studds became involved in the Central American crisis before Ronald Reagan took office. Studds traveled to Central America from January 9 to 19, 1981 in a fact-finding mission sponsored by the Boston-based Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. He was accompanied on his trip by Representatives Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) and Robert Edgar. On his trip, Studds gathered information on Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador, which he summarized in a report for the House Foreign Affairs Committee chaired by Clement J. Zablocki. Although the report began with a foreword by Zablocki stating, "The findings and recommendations contained in this report are those of Representative Studds and do not necessarily reflect the views of the members of the Committee on Foreign Affairs," the report became a benchmark document of left-leaning liberalism and was frequently quoted by liberals and radicals alike, as it was in the 1981 Daily Hampshire Gazette ad assailing Conte's $5 million military aid vote.[61]

Studds' report was a combination of information summaries and policy recommendations. The report was especially concerned with events in Nicaragua. In descriptive prose, Studds began his section on Nicaragua:

> Rising from the ashes of a devastating earthquake and civil war, Nicaragua's future political course remains as yet unclear. The air and airwaves continue to crackle with the exhilaration of revolution, the boundless energy of an entire society set free at last to determine its own fate. Able now to make their own mistakes, the Somozaless segments of Nicaragua have forged a mixed record of social progress, economic ups and downs and festering political discord.[62]

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[61] Gerry E. Studds, "Central America, 1981: Report to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, United States House of Representatives." (Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O., 1981); Daily Hampshire Gazette, April 11, 1981. Pg. 5.

[62] Studds, 5.

Like Conte before him, Studds perceived most Nicaraguans' support for the revolution, writing, "Their accomplishment has been to create within Nicaragua a universal commitment to greater social equity and concern for the country's multitude of poor, ill-clothed, ill-fed and sick people. There is a fully shared sense the revolution is necessary and just."[63] Studds emphasized the indigenous nature of the revolution and the insistence by most of those he met "that Nicaragua has the right to resolve its own destiny absent the intervention of other powers, most particularly the United States."[64] Yet, like Conte, Studds described a revolution of indeterminate direction, commenting, "...Nicaraguans do not agree among themselves on the nature of the revolution they have made."[65]

During its sojourn in Nicaragua, the delegation made the usual rounds of Sandinistas, political and business opposition leaders and ordinary Nicaraguans. One issue of concern to Studds, raised by many Costa Rican and Honduran officials he had interviewed, was the rapidly expanding size of the Nicaraguan Army, then over 30,000. When he inquired about this, Sandinista officials cited the fear of U.S. supported counterrevolution. According to the report, "Nicaraguan junta members and those in the Sandinista party... argue they must prepare for the counterrevolutionary attacks which they believe will inevitably occur. They point to the precedent of the Bay of Pigs..."[66] Many seemed braced for the incoming Reagan administration. Studds wrote, "the entire

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[63] *Ibid.*

[64] *Ibid.*

[65] *Ibid.*

[66] *Ibid, 7.*

Nicaraguan leadership is aware of the rhetoric used by candidate Reagan" which called for "'the removal of the government in Managua.'"[67] Studds described one Sandinista official who anticipated a Vietnam scenario: "One junta member told us that the size of the armed forces was predicated on the need to hold off invading American forces long enough to cause U.S. public opinion to mobilize in opposition to the intervention."[68]

Like Conte, Studds was convinced the nature of the Nicaraguan export economy moved the country toward cooperation with the United States and maintenance of a mixed economy. The report stated, "Nicaragua seeks aid from, and friendship with, all nations of the world. Elementary economics permit them no choice. Fidel Castro's demeaning and frustrating dependence on the Soviet Union is not seen by Nicaragua's new leadership as a desirable model for their country to follow."[69] Yet, in an argument that would be echoed often in the coming years, the report argues that a U.S. economic embargo would force Nicaragua to "rely on Cuba and the Soviet Union for the assistance they must have to rebuild."[70] Studds nevertheless reported the frustration of Nicaraguan business leaders who complained of excessive Sandinista regulation and lack of incentives for investment.[71]

Although generally sympathetic to the Nicaraguan revolution, the Studds Report was critical of the new government in several areas. Studds noted anger over an

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[67] *Ibid., 8.*

[68] *Ibid, 7.*

[69] *Ibid., 12.*

[70] *Ibid., 12.*

[71] Ibid., 6-7.

opposition rally cancelled by the Sandinistas and other examples of harassment of the opposition; possible Sandinista involvement with the assassination of an opposition business leader, Jorge Salazar; indefinite postponement of elections; and the nation's precarious press freedom. Writing of the selective concern over human rights that permeated the cold war era, Studds, declared, "Nicaragua has become a litmus test ideally suited for the separation of human rights hypocrites of both the left and right from those with a true commitment to social and civil justice. There are many who now express great anger and shock at the shortcomings of the FSLN who never uttered a whimper of concern during the Somoza era... Others exist, however, who accept all too willingly the rationalizations of the FSLN, despite a propensity to criticize the same type of arguments bitterly when put forth by regimes perceived as right wing."[72]

In the "Recommendations" section of his report on Nicaragua, Studds advocated what amounted to a liberalized version of the earlier Carter policy. The report recommended, "The United States must be objective, patient and restrained... As long as a legitimate chance exists for a pluralist Nicaragua, the U.S. should continue a modest economic aid program unadorned by gratuitous strings."[73] Studds further warned against "a premature retreat into the 'national security' pretexts so often and tragically used to justify intervention in the past..."[74] For Studds, the Nicaraguan revolution needed to be viewed outside cold war lenses. The report contended, "The United States needs to keep the Nicaraguan revolution in perspective. It is, after all, a revolution different from any

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[72] *Ibid.*, 9

[73] *Ibid.*, 14.

[74] *Ibid.*

other; far different, certainly, from Castro's. There is no single charismatic leader, there was no single force which won the victory..."[75]

The report concluded with a plea for the United States to respect Nicaraguans' right to self-determination:

> The most important result of the revolution in Nicaragua, after all, is not its effect on geopolitical strategy, American politics, or general stability in Central America. The most important result is that the people who fought, and whose friends were bombed, and whose children and wives were wounded or crippled or ripped apart, are now the ones that count in determining the future political life of their own country. This is, after all, what revolutions are fought for, and this is why revolutions are won.[76]

Studds' ten-day trip coincided with the most fierce period of the Salvadoran civil war; a period in which the FMLN launched its "Final Offensive" and right-wing death squad killings reached a new high. The U.S. State Department thus advised Studds and his entourage not to enter El Salvador.[77] The group did, however, arrange to meet in Honduras with a few Christian Democrats representing the Salvadoran government, non-Marxist members of the FDR, and *campesino* refugees from the war. Studds spoke with Jose Morales Ehrlich, the second ranking Christian Democrat in the Salvadoran junta who told Studds "neither a pure capitalist nor pure Marxist approach will succeed in El Salvador" and that the government aimed "to oust the oligarchy which has historically dominated [El Salvador]..." Morales painted a picture of a government that was gaining

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[75] *Ibid.*

[76] *Ibid., 15.*

[77] *Ibid., 22.*

control over the forces of the radical left and extreme right and promised "[t]he birth pains of the new Salvadoran democracy… were almost at an end."[78]

Studds also met with Social Democrats Ruben Zamora and Fabio Castillo, two of the top ranking members of the FDR, who, while acknowledging the extensive role of Marxists in the movement, described them as less than enamoured of the Soviet Union but inspired by the Cubans. The FDR leaders outlined a vision for El Salvador not unlike that described by the Christian Democrat, Jose Morales Ehrlich: "The long-range goal of the revolutionary movement… is to establish a mixed economy, with some nationalization of basic services plus an active private sector. The National Guard would be dismantled but democratic elements in the army would be retained."[79]

Unlike the interviews with the political figures, which seemed to gloss over the grim realities of El Salvador, the report included verbatim transcripts of interviews conducted by Congresswoman Mikulski with Salvadoran women who had recently fled the war zones into neighboring Honduras. The women of the refugee camp recounted horrific incidents of savagery by the Salvadoran military that were by then becoming all too familiar. At one point, the interviews were disrupted. The report transcribed Mikulski speaking into her tape recorder: "While we were doing these interviews, an airplane flew overhead, and the village immediately is upset because they are afraid that some harm is going to come to them."[80]

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[78] *Ibid., 24.*

[79] *Ibid, 25.*

[80] *Ibid., 28.*

Although Studds was unable to enter El Salvador, Mikulski's interviews confirmed his strong antipathy to aiding the Salvadoran military. Studds recommendations on El Salvador were the strongest of any country in his report and staked out a position from which the Massachusetts Democrat would not swerve over the coming years. The report recommended, "the United States should suspend military sales, training and assistance to the security forces of El Salvador on the grounds that those forces are operating independent of responsible civilian control, and are conducting a systematic campaign of terrorism directed against segments of their own population."[81] Studds was unpersuaded by the argument that military aid bought time to bolster the Salvadoran center, and declared, "Current assistance… is being used for purposes abominable to any concept of democracy or respect for human rights or dignity. It is granted on the false premise that the Duarte government represents a viable middle ground in Salvadoran political life, and that the civilian government is both willing and capable of controlling the baser instincts of the military whose arms keep them in power."[82] Instead, Studds called for a negotiated end to the war in concert with regional leaders and restructuring of the Salvadoran armed forces. Studds argued the United States must "respond to reality, not to dogma" and avoid "a desire to appear tough or to save face by defending rigidly past policies which have clearly failed."[83]

In the spring of 1981, Studds proposed the first of many "Studds amendments", this one (H.R. 1509) calling for an unconditional cut off of all future U.S. military aid to

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[81] *Ibid, 29.*

[82] *Ibid.*

[83] *Ibid., 30.*

the Salvadoran military. Many opponents of Reagan's policy were uncomfortable with such an overt challenge to the new president and sought instead to influence administration policy through the certification requirements of the Solarz-Bingham amendment. In response to one of the many letters urging support for the Studds amendment, Silvio Conte replied, "... I have decided not to cosponsor H.R. 1509 (Studds Bill) because... the prohibition against U.S. military assistance at any time in the future, as called for by H.R. 1509, would send a signal that the United States would be powerless to deter outside intervention, thereby inviting external forces to fill the power vacuum."[84] Although many liberal Democrats also felt the Studds amendment of 1981 went too far in tying the president's hands on a foreign policy issue, by staking out the left-flank on opposition to Reagan's policy in El Salvador, Studds provided cover for other liberal but less radical proposals that aimed to influence administration policy, and established Studds' reputation as one of the administration's most inveterate foes.[85]

In December 1981, the Reagan administration issued its first certification that El Salvador was meeting the requirements set forth by Congress. The certification seemed to defy what the press, human rights groups and first hand witnesses reported on the meager progress of land reform and ongoing human rights violations in El Salvador. Among the recent accounts of atrocities coming out of El Salvador that December was the El Mozote massacre in which church and press sources estimated the army had

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[84] SOC to Edwin Gabler, March 31, 1981. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Legislative Action", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[85] LeoGrande, 92.

massacred between 700 and 1,000 peasants.[86] Studds challenged Undersecretary of State Thomas Enders at a certification hearing, exclaiming, "The president has just certified that up is down, and in is out, and black is white. I anticipate his telling us that war is peace at any moment."[87] When the administration again certified progress on the five conditions later that year, Studds, joined by thirty-three cosponsors, introduced a bill, H.J.Res. 552, which declared "the president's July certification with respect to El Salvador to be null and void" and imposed a two year suspension of military aid. Still, fear of the political consequences should the Salvadoran government collapse kept moderates and many liberals from supporting the Studds bill.[88]

In 1983, opposition to the Reagan administration's policy in Central America gathered momentum for several reasons. First, the Democrats had gained seats in the November 1982 elections, deflating Reagan's aura of invincibility, which led to reinvigorated efforts in Congress to support a nuclear weapons freeze resolution and oppose the president more forcefully on Central America. Second, the legal impasse in prosecuting the murderers of the churchwomen in El Salvador slowly strengthened opponents of administration policy. And third, the solidarity movement continued to expand and redouble efforts to end U.S. support for the Salvadoran military, including a massive letter writing campaign to Congress.[89] Studds once again sought to mobilize

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[86] Mark Danner, El Mozote: A Parable of the Cold War (New York: Vintage Books, 1994).

[87] LeoGrande, 156.

[88] "Draft: H.J. Res. 552 Declaring the President's July Certification with respect to El Salvador to be Null and Void", July 1982. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvdor: Legislative Action", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[89] Silvio Conte's aids noted the surge in mail in early 1983. "Memo: To Mr. Conte. From: Tim. Re.: El Salvador Certification – District Response", February 2, 1983. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder:

more determined opposition to Reagan's policies by introducing yet another bill to "null and void" the administration's most recent certification and exercise the congressional power of the purse by terminating U.S. military aid to El Salvador. "At some point we must be willing to cut off aid," Studds pronounced at the first certification hearing of the year.[90]

Studds denounced the recent certification, beginning with the case of the U.S. churchwomen: "Nowhere in the certification documents is there a determination by the President that the government of El Salvador has made good faith efforts to investigate and bring to justice those responsible for the murders of the four churchwomen and two agrarian reform workers in El Salvador two years ago."[91] Studds then raised the cases of Michael Kline, a U.S. citizen found executed at point blank range in El Salvador, and John Sullivan, a U.S. journalist who had recently disappeared there. In response to the administration assertion of human rights progress based on a reduction of death squad murders from an average of 400 per month in 1980 to 200 per month in 1983, Studds declared:

> Before certifying positively with respect to El Salvador, the Reagan Administration has accepted a ludicrously low standard of performance in the area of human rights... The President's certification should be rejected because it is not in accord with the facts, and because it contributes to a complacency in El Salvador, which is dangerous to moderates in the government and fatal to prospects for peace.[92]

"El Salvador: Third Certification Report", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers; also, Daily Hampshire Gazette, June 7, 1983.

[90] LeoGrande, 172.

[91] "Statement of U.S. Representative Gerry Studds Regarding the Third Certification Affecting El Salvador", February 4, 1983. Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Third Certification Report, 1983", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[92] *Ibid.*

Studds concluded, "It is not ordinarily the role of Congress both to enact and also to enforce the law, but with respect to El Salvador and the certification process, that time has come."[93]

Studds solicited cosponsors to his nullification bill in the hope of adding to the thirty-three from his 1982 effort. He circulated a "Dear Colleague" letter throughout the House of Representatives, in which he detailed the evidence against the administration's claims.[94] The letter argued that the administration had forced Congress to reassert itself:

> Neither the civilian right wing nor the military of El Salvador have earned continued U.S. support. The Reagan administration is unwilling to sacrifice its other policy goals in order to confront directly the extremists in that country with whom it has chosen to deal. As a result, little progress toward ending the war or achieving a national reconciliation has been achieved. It is up to Congress, therefore, to act aggressively and to guarantee that the legal conditions placed on our aid to El Salvador are taken seriously – both by the government of El Salvador and by our own executive branch.[95]

The new nullification effort attracted almost one hundred cosponsors. Studds admitted to the press that his bill had no chance of passing but pressed on nonetheless.[96] Despite a Democratic majority in the House and the sympathy of Speaker Tip O'Neill, Studds once again ran into the obstacle of Democratic moderates, especially from the south and southwest, who feared an open challenge to the president on what they regarded as a national security issue. Given the strong anti-communist sentiment in

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[93] *Ibid.*

[94] "Dear Colleague" Letter from Gerry Studds to Membersof the House of Representatives, January 21, 1983. Series 3c, Box 64, Folder: "El Salvador: Legislation, 1983", MS 371, Subgroup II, SOC Papers.

[95] *Ibid.*

[96] Daily Hampshire Gazette, June 7, 1983.

many members' districts, they were unwilling to embrace any policy that might entail the charge of being soft on communism. Powerful Democrats such as James Wright of Texas and David Boren of Oklahoma generally supported administration policy in El Salvador. Others, though often critical of the administration, believed the Democratic Party stood more to gain by fudging the differences between the two parties on Cold War policies.[97]

In late spring of 1983, Studds decided to challenge what he saw as self-defeating bipartisanship. "It eludes me why people search for bipartisanship at all costs," Studds told an interviewer for the New York Times, adding, "Bipartisanship is the code word that lets members go the other way on the MX [missile and] duck the problems of Central America."[98] In June, Studds decided publicly to take on the advocates of moderation in an op-ed piece in the New York Times, entitled, "Bipartisan Consensus? A Mirage."[99] Studds argued that despite polls showing public apprehension about the Reagan nuclear arms build up and intervention in Central America, too many Democrats were willing to support Reagan in these areas. On the MX missile, Studds asserted, despite the fact that most Democrats "hope to kill it before it kills us", moderates in the party supported it in the hope it would nudge Reagan toward arms control. Studds argued that too many Democrats, especially moderates, seemed cowed by Reagan's personal popularity:

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[97] LeoGrande, 157, 588.

[98] New York Times, May 30, 1983.

[99] New York Times, June 13, 1983.

> A number of Congressional Democrats seem to feel that President Reagan's personal popularity makes it unwise or unsafe to oppose his policies directly. The President has effectively conveyed to the American people a nostalgic and simplistic view of the world. Mr. Reagan strikes a responsive chord in us all, because most of us have held similar views – until the clearly contrasting blacks and whites of youth gave way to the complex grays of adulthood. There are good guys (us) and bad guys (them). Those two sides fight over a kindhearted damsel with a questionable past (El Salvador), and the winner must always be faster with a gun – or as MX defenders would say, must possess a prompter hard target kill capability. In reality of course, nothing is that simple.[100]

With a presidential election coming the following year, Studds' piece argued that Democratic bipartisanship was a mistake and that the party needed to accentuate its differences with Reagan, not blur them. Studds defied conventional wisdom, which saw national security policy as playing to Reagan's strengths, and called upon Democrats to challenge the president head on. Studds wrote:

> Barring further economic collapse, if the Democrats don't win on the issues of war and peace in 1984, they will not win at all. The polls indicate quite clearly that a majority of the American people oppose Administration policy in Central America and desire a far more vigorous effort to control the nuclear arms race. The personal popularity of the President does not extend to his policies. Democrats can only lose, therefore, by blurring the real distinctions between their principles and judgments and those of the President.[101]

Shortly after undertaking his public campaign to push the Democratic Party into a more confident and confrontational direction, a sex scandal seriously slowed Studds'efforts and exacted a painful political price. Due to widespread rumors concerning sexual impropriety between members of Congress and congressional pages, as well as reports of drug use on Capitol Hill, in the early 1980s the House Ethics

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[100] *Ibid.*

[101] *Ibid.*

Committee established a commission to investigate the situation. Although the investigation revealed far less misconduct than expected, its report singled out two members of Congress for reprimands for engaging in sexual activity with seventeen-year-old pages. One was Daniel B. Crane, an Illinois Republican, whom the commission charged with having sexual relations with a seventeen-year-old young woman. The other was Gerry Studds, who, according to the report, had had an affair with a seventeen-year-old young man in 1973 and reportedly made advances toward two other pages.[102]

Studds defended himself by arguing that the affair was consensual, private and not improper, but waived his right to an Ethics Committee trial in order to protect the identity of the page. As a consequence, the House Ethics Committee recommended official reprimands for both Crane and Studds. Although Studds had been openly gay since the 1970s, the taint of impropriety left him politically wounded and tarnished his reputation as someone who sought to stake out the moral high ground on issues such as Central America.[103] Newt Gingrich of Georgia, the rising star of a more brash, ideologically committed brand of right-wing Republicanism, moved to have Studds expelled from Congress, a move that was squelched by Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill.[104]

Studds survived the scandal and continued to win reelection in the Twelfth District; however, in 1984, due to Reagan's resounding reelection, the election of Jose Napolean Duarte as president in El Salvador, and the growing stability of the Salvadoran

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[102] New York Times, July 15, 1983.

[103] *Ibid.*

[104] John A. Farrell, Tip O'Neill and the Democratic Century (Boston, N.Y., London: Little, Brown and Co., 2001) 631.

government as the war settled into a stalemate, El Salvador became less debated and divisive in the halls of Congress.[105] Further, by mid-decade, U.S. support for the Nicaraguan contras supplanted El Salvador as the major source of debate when it came to administration policy in Central America. Although Studds continued to speak out on both El Salvador and Nicaragua, the period of the early 1980s when he had become the symbol of opposition to Reagan on El Salvador was slowly fading. By mid-decade, as the U.S. proxy war against Nicaragua shifted to center stage, and as the Central American solidarity movement increasingly emerged from the shadows of the freeze movement, Democratic heavy-weights increasingly took up the mantle of opposition.

The Speaker: Tip O'Neill

Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill came from a very different school of politics than Gerry Studds. O'Neill was one of the last great New Deal-style liberals, a self proclaimed champion of the "little guy" who unabashedly advocated redistributing wealth toward the poor and working class. Reared in the backslapping milieu of Boston's ethnic politics, O'Neill was a master of parliamentary maneuver and cloakroom compromise. O'Neill was never completely comfortable with the new breed of issue driven Democratic crusaders who began to flood the party in 1972. In 1988, O'Neill spoke bluntly to Colorado Senator Gary Hart, a candidate for the Democratic nomination for president in 1984 and 1988: "You're not my cup of tea... you're this new

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[105] LeoGrande. 260-282.

type of liberal. I'm the old work and wages, take care of the poor and the hungry [kind of liberal]. I don't like your kind of politics."[106]

Although O'Neill was a product of the cold war, he in many ways became a bridge between the "old" and "new" Democrats in the 1960s when he came out relatively early against the Vietnam War, which he as a tragic mistake that took its worst toll on the poor and working class. O'Neill frequently stated that the one vote he regretted was the vote he cast in 1964 in support of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. "Of all the votes I cast during thirty-four years in the House of Representatives the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution] is the only one I regret," said the Speaker in 1986.[107]

Despite the central role Vietnam played in shaping the future speaker's views, O'Neill remained predominantly interested in domestic affairs and never displayed a great deal of savvy when it came to foreign affairs. In the 1970s, O'Neill generally supported *détente* and the Carter human rights policy, but after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, he became a staunch supporter of the Carter arms build up, including the MX missile.[108] Although O'Neill supported and helped shepherd a nuclear freeze resolution through the House, he nevertheless worked assiduously to win missile contracts for Massachusetts, despite the fact that his Cambridge district was a stronghold of the freeze movement. In foreign affairs, O'Neill worked in the early Reagan years to create an image of bipartisanship. O'Neill supported both Reagan's dispatch of U.S. marines to Lebanon and his invasion of Grenada in 1983, much to the chagrin of liberals

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[106] Farrell, 679.

[107] Leo Grande, 455.

[108] Farrell, 609-11. O'Neill later turned against the MX. Farrell, 620.

in the party. According to O'Neill biographer John A. Farrell, "If he did not share Reagan's vision, neither did he employ his powers to foil it. With a few key exceptions – most notably U.S. intervention in Central America – the Speaker approached the President's foreign policy from the mushy bi-partisan center."[109]

As the 1980s progressed, O'Neill's opposition to Reagan's policies in El Salvador and Nicaragua became increasingly adamant. O'Neill's opposition to Reagan's Central American policies stemmed from two sources. First, like many Americans, O'Neill feared Reagan's policies could embroil U.S. troops in a Vietnam type quagmire. According to an aid speaking on Central America, "There's a sense of *déjà vu* here for the Speaker... To him, the question isn't 'Who lost Vietnam?' but 'Who got us into Vietnam in the first place?'"[110] The second source of O'Neill's position was a direct result of the influence of the Cambridge solidarity movement. Although O'Neill was never completely comfortable with Quakers, academic radicals or others he regarded as middle class reformers, the presence of numerous nuns and Jesuits in the Cambridge solidarity movement had a major impact on the devoutly Catholic Speaker.[111]

In the early 1980s, a Cambridge based woman's solidarity group called the Nicaraguan Action Group occupied O'Neill's congressional office twice in an effort to move the Speaker into more forceful opposition to Reagan's Central American policies. Half of the group consisted of nuns who were deeply influenced by liberation theology and profoundly affected by the murders of Ita Ford, Dorothy Kazel, Maura Clark and

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[109] *Ibid.*, 609.

[110] New York Times, May 30, 1983.

[111] Farrell, 607-25.

Jean Donovan. Sister Jeane Gallo of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur told a reporter for the New York Times in 1984, "We realized Mr. O'Neill was key to what happened in the House. Many of us were in his district. The group decided to work on educating him about Central America and work on him to move things through Congress to help end human rights abuses."[112] According to Anne Shumway, another Nicaraguan Action Group member, "We've been very pleased that he listens to us. He is a good Catholic and trusts people in the church who give him information. He's also a humanitarian and feels he should act on the things he learns."[113]

The church had played an important role in shaping O'Neill's outlook since he was a young man. He attended Dominican primary and secondary schools in Boston graduated from Boston College, a Jesuit institution. The Speaker was perhaps most influenced by his Aunt Eunice "Annie" Tolan, who was a nun in the Maryknoll Order and died at the age of ninety-one in 1981.[114] Through Sister Annie, O'Neill developed a profound respect for the Maryknoll Sisterhood and eventually the faith based solidarity movement. O'Neill told the New York Times: "I have a connection with the Maryknoll Order... I have great trust in that order. When nuns and priests come through, I ask them questions about their feelings, what they see, who the enemy is, and I'm sure I get the truth. I haven't found any of these missionaries who aren't absolutely opposed to [Reagan's] policy."[115]

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[112] New York Times, September 12. 1984.

[113] *Ibid.*

[114] *Ibid.*

[115] *Ibid.*

O'Neill's skepticism over U.S. intervention had another personal source as well. The Speaker frequently told the story of a friend from his early years growing up in Boston, Eddie Kelly, a Marine who went to Nicaragua to fight the nationalist Augusto Cesar Sandino in the late 1920s. According to O'Neill, Kelly returned in a wheel chair from a knife wound, embittered by his experience. When O'Neill asked Kelly what the U.S. Marines were doing in Nicaragua, Kelly responded, "We're taking care of the United Fruit Company."[116]

In the early years of the Reagan administration, O'Neill personally spoke out on Central America but took a relatively hands off attitude toward the divisions in the Democratic Party over the issue. Southern Democrats led by Jim Wright of Texas tended to view Central America in a similar manner as Reagan and generally supported the Republican president's policies, especially in El Salvador. O'Neill's early *laissez-faire* approach toward Central America grew out of a decision to try to maintain as much unity as possible between centrists and liberals in the fierce budget battles of 1981 and 1982. During this time, members of the solidarity movement, and liberals in the Democratic Party like Gerry Studds worked to push the Speaker into a more assertive role on Central America.[117]

Beginning in 1983, the Speaker slowly began to exert more influence. On April 27, 1983, as debate on military aid to El Salvador became heated in Congress, Ronald Reagan took his message directly to the American people in a televised address to a joint session of Congress given exclusively to the topic of Central America. Reagan called on

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[116] Farrell, 612.

[117] LeoGrande, 92, 157-8, 169.

Congress to put aside "passivity, resignation and defeatism" and meet "this challenge to freedom and security in our hemisphere."[118] Comparing himself to President Harry Truman in 1947, but sounding eerily like Lyndon Johnson in 1965, Reagan declared, "The national security of all the Americas is at stake in Central America. If we cannot defend ourselves there, we cannot expect to prevail elsewhere. Our credibility would collapse, our alliances would crumble and the safety of our homeland would be put in jeopardy."[119]

It fell to O'Neill and Senate minority leader Robert Byrd of West Virginia to choose which Democrat would give the ten-minute televised response to the president's speech. Despite southern moderates' opposition, O'Neill and Byrd chose liberal Connecticut Senator Christopher Dodd to represent the party's response to the president.[120] Dodd had been a driving force behind the certification requirements and a frequent critic of administration policy. Traditionally, opposition responses to a president's address seek to showcase rising talent in the party, and are usually relatively innocuous and quickly forgotten. In contrast, Dodd's televised response to the president's April address created an uproar. Dodd denounced the president's policy as "a formula for disaster".[121] Rather than pour endless amounts of military aid into Central America with the risk of U.S. troops to follow, Dodd called for a policy which targeted "the factors which breed revolution" through economic aid. Dodd proclaimed, "We must

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[118] New York Times, April 28, 1983.

[119] *Ibid.*

[120] *Ibid.*

[121] *Ibid.*

make violent revolution preventable by making peaceful revolution possible."[122] In a challenge to the cold war paradigm invoked by Reagan, Dodd declared:

> If Central America were not racked with poverty, there would be no revolution.
> If Central America were not racked with hunger, there would be no revolution.
> If Central America were not racked with injustices, there would be no revolution.[123]

Dodd went on to detail his first hand experiences in El Salvador, stating, "I know about the morticians who travel the streets each morning to collect the bodies of those summarily dispatched the night before by Salvadoran security forces – gangland style – the victim on the bended knee, thumbs wired behind the back, a bullet in the brain."[124] Although the bulk of Dodd's response focused on El Salvador, he also denounced the administration's covert operations against Nicaragua, which he argued would drive the Sandinistas into the arms of the Soviets and Cubans. Dodd's impassioned conclusion set off a wave of anger among most Republicans and a number of southern Democrats. Dodd quoted Senator Edward Kennedy, who had called the president's policy a "prescription for a wider war", then inveighed, "When that day comes – when the 'dogs of war' – are loose in Central America, when the cheering has stopped, we will know where the President's appeal for more American money and a deeper American commitment has taken us."[125]

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[122] *Ibid.*

[123] *Ibid.*

[124] *Ibid.*

[125] *Ibid.*

What soon became known as Dodd's "Dogs of War" speech created a good deal of controversy. Several prominent Democrats such as Jim Wright, Senator Lloyd Bentsen of Texas and Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson of Washington, made known to reporters that they were unhappy with O'Neill's choice and Dodd's speech. Jeanne Kirkpatrick of the State Department denounced Dodd's speech as "demagoguery" and added, "I know many Democrats didn't think it represented mainstream Democratic positions." O'Neill stood solidly behind his choice.[126]

O'Neill's bi-partisan cooperation with Ronald Reagan on foreign policy continued to erode throughout 1983. From 1984 through his retirement in 1986, the Speaker became increasingly outspoken in opposing Reagan's Central American policies, and began working harder to push the Democratic Party to oppose what was quickly taking center stage as the major foreign policy battlefield of the mid-1980s, the U.S. directed contra war against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.[127]

The Boland Amendments and Opposition to U.S. Proxy War in Nicaragua

From the time he took office, Ronald Reagan worked to subvert and destabilize the government in Managua. Beginning in early 1981, the CIA worked to put together an anti-Sandinista guerrilla army from the remnants of Somoza's old National Guard The new "contra" army began making forays into Nicaragua from their bases in neighboring Honduras in mid-1981, attacking isolated villages in Nicaragua and scurrying back across the border. Slowly, the covert war grew as the contra army expanded and

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[126] New York Times, May 1, 1983.

[127] Farrell, 607-25; LeoGrande, 324-5, 454-6.

penetrated deeper into Nicaragua's interior. Soon, the northern contras were joined by a southern contra army operating out of Costa Rica, led by a flamboyant former Sandinista named Eden Pastora, and a rebellion by Mosquito Indians in Nicaragua's remote eastern Atlantic coast.[128] CIA chief William Casey met secretly with the Senate and House Intelligence Committees and assured their respective chairmen, Arizona Republican Barry Goldwater and Massachusetts Democrat Edward Boland, that the contra army numbered less than 500 soldiers, and its covert operations were limited to the goal of interdicting Sandinista arms supplies to the guerrillas in El Salvador. In no way was it U.S. policy, Casey assured the committees, to foment efforts to topple the government in Nicaragua.[129]

Elected to Congress in 1952, Ed Boland was hardly a crusader like Gerry Studds, nor was he an old school liberal like Tip O'Neill. Boland had a reputation as a moderate who shunned publicity, a foreign policy traditionalist who deferred to presidents but believed strongly in the rule of law. As the New York Times observed, Boland was "not known for rocking many boats."[130] Boland was the type of circumspect member of Congress ideally suited to chair an Intelligence Committee. He was an establishment figure who commanded respect on Capitol Hill. Boland had been a personal friend of John F. Kennedy and shared a Washington, D. C. apartment with Tip O'Neill. When William Casey assured Boland of the limited scope of the covert operations in Nicaragua, Boland took the CIA chief at his word and authorized the secret funds for the

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[128] LeoGrande, 285-305.

[129] *Ibid.*, 300.

[130] New York Times, April 25, 1983.

operation, with the understanding that the goal remain limited to interdicting arms supplies.[131]

In February of 1982, the Washington Post published the first press reports of the covert raids into Nicaragua emanating from Honduras.[132] The story remained low key, however, until November of 1982 when Newsweek published detailed reports of contra operations, which put the counterrevolutionary army at 4,000 troops (Casey had told Boland they numbered 1,500) and described reports of atrocities that would grow increasingly common over the coming years.[133] In response to the reports, liberal Representative Tom Harkin of Iowa denounced the contras as "vicious cutthroat murderers...[and] remnants of the evil, murderous National Guard..." and proposed legislation to ban all U.S. support for any group undertaking military activities against Nicaragua.[134] To head off what he regarded as a drastic measure, Boland offered a substitute measure which carried the same language as the classified bill, stating that U.S. support for the operation be limited to the goal of arms interdiction and not "for the purpose of overthrowing the government of Nicaragua." The first "Boland" Amendment passed in December of 1982 by a vote of 411-0 and was accepted in conference by the Republican controlled Senate.[135]

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[131] LeoGrande, 300, 312.

[132] Washington Post, February 14, 1982; March 18, 1982.

[133] Newsweek, November 8, 1982.

[134] LeoGrande, 306.

[135] *Ibid.*, 304.

Reports of widening contra attacks and descriptions of contra cruelty continued to grow in early 1983. Both the House and Senate Intelligence Committees sent fact-finding delegations to Honduras and Nicaragua to discover exactly what was going on. Their reports were not reassuring. Congressman Berkley Bedell (D-IA) declared, "If the American people could have talked with the common people of Nicaragua, whose women and children are being indiscriminately kidnapped, tortured and killed by terrorists financed by the American taxpayers, they would rise up in legitimate anger and demand that support for criminal activity be ended at once."[136] Robert Torricelli (D-NJ) stated that U.S. officials with whom he had met privately in Central America told him they regarded the Boland Amendment as a "legal triviality".[137] Senator Patrick Leahy reported that the contra operations were far broader than anything the Intelligence Committees had been led to believe, a verdict seconded by House Democrat, Wyche Fowler of Georgia.[138]

Despite protestations by Republicans like Barry Goldwater and Senator Howard Baker of Tennessee, the cautious Ed Boland declared, "It is my judgment that there has been an apparent violation of the law. If you look at the stories that have come out of there, from reporters and members [of Congress] who have gone down there, the evidence is very strong."[139] Reporters pressed President Reagan for a response to Boland's comments. "We are complying with the law," insisted Reagan, "...Anything

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[136] New York Times, April 14. 1983.

[137] *Ibid.*

[138] New York Times, April 25, 1983. LeoGrande, 312.

[139] New York Times, April 14, 1983.

that we're doing in that area is simply trying to interdict the supply lines which are supplying the guerrillas."[140] Another reporter pressed the matter further: "But Mr. President, what is the American public to think if Congressman Boland, who as you know is chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, says there's strong evidence that we are violating the law?" Reagan responded by blaming the press, charging, "Well, maybe some of you people misled him."[141]

Boland and House Foreign Affairs chairman Clement Zablocki put forth a bill, which would cut off all funds for the purpose of destabilizing the government of Nicaragua, and replace the contra's "interdiction" money with $80 million in interdiction aid for regional governments. Boland's determination grew over the summer when the administration announced military exercises in Honduras called "Big Pine II" which lasted six months and involved over 5,000 U.S. Army troops and a huge naval flotilla off the coast of Nicaragua. Administration saber rattling during Big Pine II convinced many members of Congress that the administration sought the overthrow of the Sandinista government, and that the military exercises might even be a precursor to a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua.[142] The House approved the Boland-Zablocki Amendment, but the Republican controlled Senate passed $50 million in aid for the contras. Tip O'Neill urged the House not to budge, but the joint conference committee settled on a compromise $24 million for the contras.[143]

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[140] *Ibid.*

[141] *Ibid.*

[142] LeoGrande, 317, 320-1; For an overview of contra aid through the late spring of 1984, see New York Times, May 27, 1984.

[143] *Ibid, 324.*

The full scope of the CIA's covert activities came to light in the spring of 1984 when international reports confirmed that the CIA had been mining Nicaraguan harbors and blowing up coastal oil refineries. Over two dozen international ships from around the world suffered damage from striking the CIA mines, and the oil refinery fires covertly set by U.S. Special Forces at Corinto necessitated the evacuation of over 20,000 residents and sent millions of gallons of fuel into the environment. Few believed the Reagan administration's claims that the widespread sabotage was the work of the contras. The government of Nicaragua took the case to the World Court in the Hague. The administration quickly announced that they did not recognize the Court's jurisdiction. Even the administration's most stalwart defender when it came to contra aid, Barry Goldwater, denounced the administration for its illegal activities and keeping the Intelligence Committees in the dark.[144]

Boland submitted yet another amendment to cut off contra funding and "end this deadly war." In May of 1984, the House passed a third Boland Amendment 241-177. The Senate voted $28 million, which was held up in conference. This time the compromise tipped in the House's favor. Although the conference committee approved $14 million, the funds were to remain frozen until March of 1985, and could only then be dispersed by a joint resolution of Congress. Further, the new Boland Amendment forbid the channeling of aid to the contras through any government agency. For the first time, the Boland Amendment of May 1984 cut off all U.S. funds for the contras. With the cut off, a Marine Major named Oliver North, working under the auspices of the National Security Council, began seeking alternative sources of funding for the contras

[144] *Ibid.*, 330-40.

who now numbered well over 10,000.Working under National Security advisors Robert McFarland and then John Poindexter, North was confident he was carrying out the president's wishes. In 1985, as part of his secret contra funding operations, North illegally sold missiles to Iran and diverted the profits to the contras.[145]

The debates on contra aid during the spring of 1984 represented the apex of opposition to Reagan's policy toward Nicaragua and forced the issues of Central America onto the floor of the Republican controlled Senate, where no floor debate had occurred since the 1981. Throughout the early 1980s, Massachusetts Senator Ted Kennedy had spoken out against Reagan's policies in Central America but had remained more focused on the campaign for a nuclear freeze resolution. The waning of the freeze movement and the escalation of the Reagan administration's campaign to destabilize Nicaragua in 1983 and 1984 led Kennedy to assume a higher profile in the Central America debates.[146]

On March 28, 1984, Kennedy opened Senate debate on additional aid for El Salvador and the contras with a strong denunciation of administration policies in Central America, which Kennedy decried as "interventionist" and "imperialistic". "The time is long overdue for pursuing the path of negotiations," declared Kennedy.[147] When the Republican leadership sought to limit debate to two days, Kennedy inveighed, "This is the most important foreign policy issue the Congress will address this year. If the Senate

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[145] *Ibid.*, 343-45. Lawrence E. Walsh, Firewall: The Iran-Contra Conspiracy and Cover Up (New York: Norton, 1997); Peter Kornbluh and Malcolm Byrne, eds., The Iran-Contra Scandal: The Declassified History (New York: New Press, 1993).

[146] *Ibid.*, 243.

[147] Boston Globe, March 29, 1984.

can spend two and a half weeks on school prayer and three days on oil mergers, it seems to me that we can spend more than two days on the issue of Central America."[148] Working closely with Democratic Senators Patrick Leahy (VT) and Christopher Dodd (CT), Kennedy proposed a series of amendments, which, although doomed in the Republican controlled Senate, kept the floor open to a sustained debate on Central America. Kennedy's proposals included amendments to: 1) limit aid to El Salvador to $21 million; 2) make all future aid to El Salvador contingent on the resolution of the murder cases of the U.S. church women and labor advisors; 3) delete all funds to the contras; and 4) ban the introduction of U.S. combat forces into Central America without an explicit vote of approval by Congress. Kennedy pushed especially hard for the last amendment.[149] In response to frequent reports of U.S. military advisors taking on combat related missions in El Salvador, as well as the expanding military exercises in Honduras and off the coast of Nicaragua, Kennedy wrote Secretary of Defense Weinberger to protest that the administration was "systematically placing United States ships, planes and personnel in harms way."[150] Kennedy's effort to forbid the use of U.S. troops without approval from Congress failed 72-23. The Senator sought to put a positive face on the vote, stating, "There were only two Senators courageous enough to vote against the Gulf of Tonkin resolution. We did considerably better than that."[151]

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[148] Boston Globe, March 30, 1984.

[149] New York Times, March 29, 1984; March 30, 1984.

[150] New York Times, May 6, 1984.

[151] Boston Globe, March 30, 1984.

The Reagan administration revived the issue of contra aid in early 1985. Although Reagan had won a landslide victory over Walter Mondale the previous November, winning forty-nine of fifty states, the popular president's coattails were shorter than expected. The Republicans picked up fourteen seats in the House and lost two in the Senate, neither of which changed hands. Nevertheless, hardliners in the administration encouraged Reagan to go all out over the issue of contra aid. The National Security Council's vast, secret, illegal funding network was only enough to keep the contras in the field, not topple the Sandinista government. Thus, in the spring of 1985, the administration sought to have Congress vote to release the $14 million of suspended aid set aside by the House-Senate compromise of 1984.[152]

Liberals in the House were determined to defeat even the most innocuous sounding bill for fear that a conference committee compromise would restore military aid to the contras. The liberals received encouragement from the Speaker, Tip O'Neill who grew increasingly outspoken against contra aid. The previous year, O'Neill denounced the contras, stating, "These people have been down there as murderers, marauders, and rapists… What are we going to do? Reward them? What are they? Paid Hessians?"[153] Although the Senate voted to release the $14 million in "humanitarian" aid 53-46, the House prevented any bill from passing, which in effect kept the restrictions of the Boland Amendment in place.[154]

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[152] LeoGrande. 397-413.

[153] New York Times, May 27, 1984.

[154] LeoGrande, 423-6.

The tide seemed to be running against the administration when it received help from an unexpected quarter. Just days after the votes that killed contra aid in late April 1985, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega embarked upon an ill-timed trip to the Soviet Union. Reagan administration supporters pointed to the trip as proof of their claims that Nicaragua was moving into the communist bloc. The trip put opponents of contra aid on the defensive. Speaking of Ortega, Tip O'Neill told a reporter, "He's embarrassed us, to be perfectly truthful." "We're in a damaging limiting situation," an aide to O'Neill told another reporter.[155]

The Ortega trip opened up a floodgate of red baiting. White House Communications Director Patrick Buchanan declared, "The Speaker and the House Democrats, I think, have an obligation to tell the American people why they trusted the words of Nicaraguan communists over the President of the United States, why they put faith in the promises of a man who heads a regime that is admittedly Marxist-Leninist."[156] Although embarrassed by the trip, O'Neill stood his ground in opposing contra aid. The Speaker declared that Ortega's "visit to Moscow does not justify an American attempt to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. It does not justify aid to the contras."[157]

Before the furor over Daniel Ortega's April trip to the Soviet Union died down, President Reagan issued the executive order imposing a U.S. economic embargo on

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[155] New York Times, May 9, 1985. One of the reasons for Ortega's trip was to cement an oil deal with the Soviet Union. Until recently, Nicaragua had received the bulk of its oil from Mexico which stopped extending Nicaragua oil credits under pressure from the United States. LeoGrande, 426-28.

[156] *Ibid.*

[157] Boston Globe, May 8, 1985.

Nicaragua. In response, Tip O'Neill asserted that the United States "must stop acting like the elephant that reels in terror every time the mouse scoots across the floor."[158] Meanwhile, the embargo set off a massive wave of Pledge of Resistance protests and sit-ins across the country. Although the embargo sparked an explosion of activist protest and sharpened liberal opposition to Reagan's policies, the fallout out from Ortega's trip had turned the tide. The administration moved to have Congress reconsider contra aid.

On June 1, 1985, Speaker Tip O'Neill took to the airwaves to respond to President Reagan's Saturday morning radio address. The Speaker dedicated his radio time to two topics close to the hearts of radical activists and liberal reformers: apartheid in South Africa and U.S. intervention in Central America. In the spring of 1985, huge campus protests for university divestment from South Africa swept the country. The explosion of anti-embargo protests later that spring soon joined the ascendant anti-apartheid movement. The two movements frequently combined their messages into a general assault on what they viewed as the hypocrisy of U.S. cold war policy. In his June 1st radio address, the Speaker echoed the movements' linkage of the two issues in a general broadside against the direction of the Reagan administration's foreign policy at mid-decade.[159]

O'Neill blasted the President's policies in Central America as "a retread version of gunboat diplomacy", and declared that apartheid had become "a symbol of our policy in Africa." O'Neill denounced the administration's policy of "constructive engagement" with the white minority government as "nothing more than a gentleman's agreement to

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[158] Boston Globe, May 8, 1985.

[159] Boston Globe, June 1, 1985.

hear no evil, see no evil and speak no evil of South Africa." In Nicaragua, O'Neill continued, the "gunboat has become a symbol of our policy." The administration, he added, had "fallen into a trap of believing power is a substitute for diplomacy." O'Neill called on America to stand "tall in support of the right of every nation to seek its own national destiny and the right of every people to choose their own form of government…Unfortunately in Central America and South Africa, our policies fall short of that standard. What we are doing contradicts what America stands for."[160]

O'Neill's radio address received a good deal of attention and stimulated a significant amount of commentary, but was not enough to defeat renewed contra aid. In early June, the House of Representatives voted 232-196 against renewing the Boland Amendment and passed instead a $27 million "non-lethal" aid bill identical to one passed by the Senate. Congressionally funded aid to the contras, which the 1984 Boland Amendment had cut for over a year, began to flow once again. O'Neill argued he had won a partial victory since the aid was non-military and could not be delivered through the CIA. His view did not take into account the millions of dollars of illegal covert funds, which were now available for increased arms purchases. Further, the $27 million maintained the contra army in the field and kept the door open to future U.S. military aid. The injection of aid was felt quickly as the contra war against Nicaragua again intensified.[161]

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[160] *Ibid.*

[161] LeoGrande, 431-38.

The entire Massachusetts delegation voted against non-lethal aid, including Silvio Conte who was one of only seven Republicans to buck the president.[162] Shortly after the vote, learned that the administration was closing the Agricultural Stabilization Office in Amherst and relocating it to Providence, Rhode Island. The office, which served farmers in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut, employed only six people, but the closing was a clear expression of the administration's displeasure with the maverick Republican. In response to the slap on the wrist, Conte quipped, "Maybe they'll take my beekeepers office away."[163]

Other members of the Massachusetts delegation were more serious in the wake of the vote. Senator Edward Kennedy believed the embargo and renewed contra aid presaged a heightened commitment to the overthrow of Nicaragua that could easily end with a U.S. military invasion. In a speech before an audience from the American Stock Exchange, Kennedy warned:

> In short, our present course is taking the United States toward unilateral intervention in Nicaragua – toward a war which, whether we like it or not, will inevitably involve American forces in combat… [an invasion which] would plunge us into the most unwanted, unnecessary and unjustified war in our history…Internationally, Nicaragua would be portrayed as America's Afghanistan. The single greatest beneficiary of an American invasion of Nicaragua would be the Soviet Union…[164]

Kennedy invoked the memories of Vietnam, at home as well as abroad, stating, "Domestically some of the greatest damage would be inflicted on our own society, which would be bitterly divided. Do we really want to relive an earlier decade of angry

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[162] New York Times, June 13, 1985.

[163] Valley Advocate, June 19, 1985.

[164] Daily Hampshire Gazette, June 12, 1985.

protest and the tragic days of Kent State?"[165] The anti-embargo protests of the spring made such a scenario credible. By calling to mind Vietnam, Kennedy touched on a theme that permeated the entire debate over Central America throughout the 1980s.

The Long Shadow of Vietnam

Throughout the 1980s, the debates over Central America fluctuated between two poles that had come to delineate the boundaries of U.S. cold war foreign policy. The first was the lingering fear of being accused of "losing" a country to communism. Observed Texas Democrat Jim Wright in 1985, "Nobody wants to be portrayed as friendly toward communism. That's been true for forty years."[166] Especially during the debates over El Salvador, few congressional critics of administration policy wished to risk the political backlash should the country fall to the Marxist rebels as a result of their cutting aid. Fear of the charge "Who Lost El Salvador?" counterbalanced the distaste with which many liberal and moderate members of Congress viewed the repressive Salvadoran regime. Silvio Conte summed up the dilemma succinctly: "It's a Catch-22 situation. Congress doesn't want to see El Salvador go down, but they don't want to further the killings [through military aid] either…There's no doubt about it, it's a very difficult, thorny issue."[167]

The other pole that shaped the debate was the Vietnam War, an experience that had left deep and lasting scars in the national psyche, but from which, conservatives,

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[165] *Ibid.*

[166] New York Times, June 3, 1985.

[167] New York Times, March 12, 1983.

liberals and radicals drew vastly different lessons. For many conservatives, the lesson was that political leaders should not put limits on the military in its pursuit of victory. For those on the right, the war in Vietnam was not so much won by the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong as lost by Americans. For many liberals, the lesson was that the United States should avoid the mistake of turning every regional conflict into an east-west showdown, where the United States overextends itself by committing its power, prestige and the lives of its youth to preserving a corrupt and unpopular government. For radicals, the U.S. war in Vietnam was proof of the imperialist and militarist dynamics of U.S. foreign policy that could only be stopped through mass movements and ultimately transformative social change in the United States.

Throughout the 1980s, the Vietnam War haunted the debates over Central America. The comments of Reagan's critics were replete with references to the Indochina war. Ted Kennedy invoked the specter of the Tonkin Gulf Resolution in 1984 and Kent State in 1985. In 1983 he echoed a phrase from the Vietnam era when he charged, "The president's overall policy is a prescription for a wider war." When Connecticut's Christopher Dodd spoke of "unleashing the dogs of war", the image he meant to conjure up was that of U.S. troops sloshing through Central American jungles. Yet many liberals remained paralyzed between fear of "losing" a nearby nation to communism and failing to prevent another Vietnam War. Tip O'Neill caught the dilemma in 1983 succinctly when he stated of El Salvador, "There's a strong feeling around hear that it's another Vietnam situation... At the same time nobody wants to see that country go Marxist."[168]

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[168] *Ibid.*

Just as the fear of appearing "soft" on communism put opponents of Reagan's policies on the defensive, the Vietnam syndrome forced the Reagan administration to deny constantly that it was getting the country into "another Vietnam". The administration went to great lengths to sidestep language that might conjure up the conflict in Southeast Asia. To avoid evoking the memory of the role U.S. advisors played in drawing the military deeper into the war in South Vietnam, the Reagan administration insisted on calling U.S. military advisors in El Salvador "trainers".[169] Fearing a rerun of Vietnam, Congress capped the number of U.S. advisors in El Salvador at fifty-five. When asked if the administration was basing its policies in Central America on the "domino theory", Secretary of State Alexander Haig described Soviet designs in Central America instead as a "priority hit list".[170] Reagan declared, "Let me say to those who invoke the memory of Vietnam, there is no thought of sending American combat troops to Central America."[171] And in a famous speech at Georgetown University in 1984, Reagan sought again to move beyond the "Vietnam syndrome" by criticizing those in Congress who believed the U.S. was "still in the troubled waters of Vietnam" and hamstrung U.S. policy with their reluctance to use force abroad. Alluding to the policies of the Carter years, Reagan declared, "We will not return to the days of hand-wringing, defeatism, decline and despair."[172]

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[169] LeoGrande, 95.

[170] New York Times, March 19, 1981.

[171] New York Times, April 28, 1983.

[172] New York Times, April 7, 1984. In the conclusion of his in depth study of the U.S. and Central America in the 1980s, William LeoGrande writes, "We went to war in Central America to exorcise the ghosts of Vietnam and to renew the national will to use force abroad. These

The Reagan administration's defensiveness when it came to comparisons with Vietnam was well founded. Throughout the 1980s, opinion polls continuously revealed the lingering impact the Vietnam War had on public opinion. Poll after poll showed opposition to Reagan's policies in Central America and the fear that U.S. troops would eventually find themselves fighting in Central America.[173] A New York Times poll in 1984 showed only one in three supporting Reagan's policies in Central America, and over half expressing fear his policies would lead to the introduction of U.S. combat troops.[174] Polls also showed that many Americans were uninformed when it came to Central America, and that opposition to administration policies grew the more informed one became. Yale public opinion expert Edward R. Tuft noted a major shift in public attitudes since the Vietnam War. Whereas before Vietnam, presidents could count on "uninformed loyalty" when it came to foreign affairs, in the post-Vietnam era Americans evinced "uninformed skepticism and informed hostility".[175]

The solidarity movement sought to appeal to these widespread public doubts. Although relatively few Americans shared radicals' enthusiasm for the revolutionary forces of Central America, they shared their fear of U.S. military intervention. Among the movement's slogans were "El Salvador is Spanish for Vietnam". Unlike the Vietnam era, however, when the movement against the war grew slowly, the solidarity movement hoped to stop direct U.S. intervention before it began. In many ways, the Pledge of

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imperatives, more than the Soviet threat, Fidel Castro's menace, or the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran revolutions, shaped U.S. policy..." LeoGrande, 590.

[173] New York Times, July 24, 1983.

[174] New York Times, April 29, 1984.

[175] New York Times, July 1, 1983.

Resistance hoped to keep the threat of Vietnam-era mass protest in reserve as a deterrent to a U.S. military invasion of Nicaragua or El Salvador.

Indeed, the movement against U.S. intervention in Central America included many familiar names from the Vietnam War era, such as Benjamin Spock, David Dellinger, Rev. William Sloane Coffin, Dick Gregory, Angela Davis and many others. Often overlooked, however, was the large presence of Vietnam veterans in the movement.[176] Although political outlooks ran the gamut among Vietnam veterans, by the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Vietnam War produced a growing number of vets opposed to the ongoing war in Indochina. Vietnam Veterans Against the War, founded in 1967, continued to grow until in 1971, the organization commanded national attention with a week of protest and educational activities in the nation's capital, which included hundreds of veterans throwing away their medals on the steps of Congress. After the war, many vets stayed politically active, lobbying the government on issues of concern to veterans such as health care, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse and homelessness. Others, radicalized during the late 1960s and early 1970s, remained active with leftist organizations opposed to U.S. cold war policy.[177]

Some of the most well-known and committed activists against U.S. intervention in Central America were veterans of the Vietnam War. Among them was Dr. Charles Clements, an Air Force pilot during the war in Vietnam who subsequently became a Quaker and a doctor and went into Salvadoran rebel "zones of control" to treat victims

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[176] Boston Globe, November 13, 1983.

[177] Gerald Nicosia, Home To War: A History of the Vietnam Veterans Movement (New York: Crown Publishers, 2001).

of the war. Clements documented his experiences in El Salvador in a famous book entitled, Witness to War and was a frequent witness at congressional hearings.[178] Another veteran, S. Brian Willson, was a guard at an Air Force base during the Vietnam War. In the 1980s, he worked with veterans in Massachusetts and received a special commendation by Governor Michael Dukakis. Willson became active in the solidarity movement and went to Nicaragua. In 1987, he and three other veterans attempted to block a naval troop train carrying weapons bound for El Salvador. Willson lost both of his legs when the train refused to stop.[179]

When Congress passed $27 million in "non-lethal" aid to the contras in June 1985, six Vietnam veterans occupied the Boston office of fellow veteran, Senator John Kerry. The vets were apparently unaware of Kerry's strong opposition to contra aid. Upon learning the news of the occupation by the vets, Kerry placed a call from Washington to his office in the Boston Federal Building. Kerry spoke with his fellow veterans for over an hour. According to forty-one year old protester, Jim Packer, "We spoke to Kerry in a conference call and … realized that many of our goals are similar…We agreed to leave peaceably at 11 p.m." Packer told a reporter, "We are not connected with the Pledge of Resistance… The idea was that we were upset at the Senate vote and what we see as an escalation toward war in Central America. We did

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[178] Charles Clements. Witness to War (Toronto, New York: Bantam, 1984). A 1985 documentary on Dr. Clements life, "Witness to War: Dr. Charlie Clements" won the 1985 Academy award for best short subject documentary.

[179] http: www.brianwillson.com

this as a protest against the Senate vote and the road to war… We've had the experience and we don't want another generation of vets."[180]

The Vietnam Veteran: Senator John F. Kerry

John Forbes Kerry was born to a Jewish father and a blue blood mother. His mother hailed from the Forbes family, which was among Boston's most prestigious and elite families. As a young man, Kerry grew up in affluence. In the early 1960s, Kerry, like many of his generation, was inspired by President John F. Kennedy and took great pride in the fact that the two shared initials. Educated at St. Paul's and Yale, Kerry began speaking out against the Vietnam War in 1966 in debates while a student at Yale. After graduation, Kerry learned he was to be drafted, so he enlisted in the Navy in order to avoid combat as an army infantryman. Kerry entered the Navy, however, at a time when it was expanding the use of Navy patrol boats, or "swift boats", in South Vietnam's rivers. Kerry found himself in command of a patrol boat on the Mekong Delta, and in February 1969 saw fierce combat in which he was wounded. The young lieutenant received three bronze stars, a silver star and a Purple Heart during his tour in Vietnam.[181]

Kerry received an early discharge in January 1970 in order to run for Congress. The Massachusetts Fourth District seat was held by a pro-war Democrat, and Kerry, who always harbored political ambitions, hoped to unseat him running as an anti-war candidate. Kerry's plans were changed when anti-war activist Father Robert F. Drinan of

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[180] Daily Hampshire Gazette, June 12, 1985.

[181] Nicosia, 70-1.

Boston College decided to run. Kerry joined Father Drinan's campaign, which won the seat.[182]

In 1970, Kerry joined the fast growing Vietnam Veterans Against the War. Kerry's rise in the organization was meteoric due to his outstanding oratorical abilities, his political connections and his skill as a fundraiser. He appeared on the Dick Cavett Show as well as Meet the Press where he criticized the war and the Nixon administration's treatment of veterans.[183] Kerry became a leader of the liberal wing of VVAW, which sought a single-issue focus on opposing the war and working within the system. He experienced tension with the smaller, radical and revolutionary wing of VVAW, which pushed for more confrontational tactics and believed only sweeping social change could end the war or prevent new ones.[184]

The young veteran rose to national prominence during the April 1971 VVAW protests in Washington D.C. At the last minute, William Fulbright, chair of the House Foreign Relations Committee, asked Kerry to appear as a witness. At the hearings, Kerry spoke passionately and eloquently against the war. Kerry asked the senators: "How do you ask a man to be the last to die in Vietnam? How do you ask a man to be the last one to die for a mistake?"[185] After his testimony, Kerry put his name to a compilation of stories by members of VVAW entitled The New Soldier. Within a year, however, Kerry left the VVAW. To his supporters in VVAW, Kerry had helped establish the

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[182] *Ibid.*, 72.

[183] *Ibid.*, 72, 108.

[184] *Ibid.*, 114.

[185] *Ibid.*, 133.

organization's national reputation and conferred a mainstream respectability upon the group with his moving Senate testimony and his many speeches.[186] To his critics, Kerry was merely using VVAW as a launching pad for a future political career. A radical VVAW critic said of Kerry, "he came, he saw, he conquered, and he split."[187]

In 1972, Kerry ran for Congress and lost in an election year that saw George McGovern win Massachusetts and Gerry Studds ride an anti-war message to victory. Throughout much of the 1970s, Kerry worked quietly as a District Attorney in Massachusetts' Middlesex County. Then, in 1982, Michael Dukakis tapped the Vietnam Veteran as Lieutenant Governor in his second run for the governorship.[188] In 1984, Kerry ran for the Senate seat vacated by the popular centrist Democrat Paul Tsongas. His Republican opponent was conservative businessman Raymond Shamie, who positioned himself as an ideological twin of Ronald Reagan. The race was contentious and Kerry fared better than expected. In a national election that witnessed the landslide re-election of Ronald Reagan, Kerry won election 56% to 44%.[189]

Kerry quickly took up the issue of Central America, frequently invoking the lessons of Vietnam:

> One of the greatest errors of Vietnam was our inability to read history. We were unwilling to look at the long-term process that was playing itself out between North and South and among Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and other areas. Today, in the same way, we are not looking at the history of

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[186] *Ibid.*, 136.

[187] *Ibid.*, 211.

[188] New York Times, October 30, 1984.

[189] New York Times, November 7, 1984.

American involvement in Central America as well as the aspirations of the indigenous population.[190]

In his first months as a U.S. Senator, Kerry focused on opposing aid to the contras. The freshman senator worked to cultivate ties to the Massachusetts solidarity movement by having his aid Richard Bell read statements of support to solidarity protestors, including building occupiers, during the spring anti-embargo protests. Kerry voted twice against "non-lethal" aid, and in April of 1985 went on a peace mission to Managua with fellow freshman Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA). The senators met personally with Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega, who asked Harkin and Kerry to bring back a ceasefire proposal in exchange for bilateral talks with the U.S. and an end to U.S. funding of the contras. The State Department denounced the proposal as propaganda and demanded that the Sandinista government open direct talks with the contras, whom the Sandinistas regarded as U.S. puppets. Harkin, for years one of the most outspoken critics of Reagan's Central American policies, stated of the Nicaraguan government, "... it became clear that they desire peace and not only normal but friendly relations with the United States."[191]

Kerry's foray into international peacemaking was a bold move so early in his career as a United States Senator. The Reagan administration denounced Kerry and Harkin as tools of Sandinista propaganda, Senator Barry Goldwater accused them of breaking the law, and far right conservatives decried them as traitors. Kerry remained unruffled. When a reporter for The Advocate asked Kerry if the administration wasn't

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[190] U.S. News and World Report, April 15, 1985.

[191] New York Times, April 22, 1985.

more interested in a military solution than negotiations, Kerry answered, "That's exactly why they reacted the way they did. It's a case of if you don't like the message, kill the messenger. We put them in a very embarrassing position because we exposed their policy... We wanted to stop the killing, to bring about some stabilization."[192] Upon his return, Kerry declared, "We are treating the nations of Latin America as our Eastern Europe. Pluralism of views in our hemisphere apparently has no place in this administration's policies, just as pluralism in the Eastern Bloc is not allowed by the Soviets."[193] In May, 1985, Kerry denounced the embargo, declaring, "This unilateral display of arrogance is unpardonable...The action will only weaken our position in the hemisphere. We are undermining the very hemispheric institutions which are so vital to our ability to marshal solidarity in the face of any real threat of Soviet intrusion into our sphere of influence."[194] Despite Kerry's arduous efforts, Congress passed $27 million in non-lethal aid.

In the spring of 1986, contra aid again came before the Congress. By this time, the Sandinista government had taken increasingly repressive measures in response to the escalating war, and the Reagan administration hoped to take advantage of the growing hostility to the Sandinistas in Congress to push for $100 million in lethal aid. The administration employed new levels of red baiting and the president furiously lobbied a handful of centrist Democrats and Republicans. Meanwhile, Tip O'Neill had recently announced his retirement at the end of the year, and made clear he wished to see an end

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[192] Valley Advocate, May 1, 1985.

[193] Valley Advocate, May 8, 1985.

[194] *Ibid.*

to the contra war as part of his legacy. Democrats rallied to "win one for the Tipper" in what many in the press billed as a final showdown between the President and the Speaker. In the first test of strength, the Speaker prevailed and the House narrowly defeated the contra aid bill 222-210.[195]

Shortly thereafter, however, the Sandinista army followed the contras several miles into Honduras. Although the Sandinistas had undertaken similar incursions before, the Reagan administration magnified the incident to the level of an invasion, and in the ensuing hysteria turned enough swing votes to procure House passage of contra aid 221-209. The fate of the contras now fell to the Republican controlled Senate where the energetic newcomers Kerry and Harkin launched a filibuster, which was soon joined by Ted Kennedy and others. Fearing being tarred as obstructionists, however, some liberal Senators worked to end the filibuster and focus on winning back the Senate in 1986.[196]

Kerry's crusade against the contras went beyond his visit to Managua in 1985 and his filibuster in 1986. In the spring of 1986, Kerry urged Republican chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee Richard Lugar to allow him to conduct hearings into allegations of contra drug smuggling and gunrunning. Investigations carried out by Kerry's staff led them to believe that there was ample evidence to conduct hearings. Kerry aide Richard McColl stated that although the staff had found "no smoking gun... there are enough people telling the same story" to warrant hearings. Lugar continued to

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[195] LeoGrande, 454-7.

[196] *Ibid.*

deny Kerry the hearings and argued that the best way to eliminate any contra corruption was to make sure the contras were fully funded.[197]

In their research, Kerry and his staff stumbled upon a secret arms supply network, the scope of which became apparent at the end of 1986 when a Lebanese newspaper broke the news of a vast covert operation run out of the National Security Council in which profits from missile sales to Iran in exchange for promises to release U.S. hostages were diverted to the contras. These illicit operations had grown in direct response to the 1984 aid cut off of contra aid by the Boland amendment. In late 1986, under public pressure, Attorney General Edmund Meese appointed Lawrence E. Walsh as Independent Prosecutor to investigate the illegal arms sales to Iran and diversion of the profits to the contras. In 1987, the House and Senate set up a joint "Iran-Contra Committee" and Oliver North, Robert McFarland, Richard Secord and John Poindexter became household names as members of Congress sought to learn the scope of the operations and what the president knew. Although much of the public embraced North as a hero during his televised testimony before the committee, the marine's popularity did not translate into support for Reagan's contra policies. As the extent of high-level involvement within the administration became evident, Reagan's poll ratings reached all-time lows.[198]

The Iran-Contra scandal and the 1986 elections, which turned the Senate over to Democratic control, opened the door for Kerry to pursue his allegations of contra drug smuggling. In the spring of 1988, Kerry began holding several weeks of one-man

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[197] LA Times, April 23, 1986.

[198] LeoGrande, 456-504; Walsh; Kornbluh and Byrne.

hearings on the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations. The committee interviewed numerous witnesses and took video recorded affidavits from individuals in Central America. Richard J. Bronneke, an arms smuggler, told Kerry he had been approached by Israeli Mossad agents to coordinate a drug and gun running scheme with the Columbian Medellin Cartel and Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega. According to Brenneke, the Israelis assured him the plan had the full knowledge of Vice President Bush's national security advisor, Donald Gregg who, they claimed, was coordinating the efforts to arms the contras. Benneke's testimony was corroborated by former Panamanian Consul Jose Blandon who described drug laden planes owned by the Medellin cartel receiving safe transit from Manuel Noriega in Panama in return for kick backs and promises of better relations with Washington. Blandon claimed he had secret information that "could affect the [1988] elections of the United States..."[199] Drug smugglers Michael Palmer, George Morales and Gary Betzner told the Kerry committee that they would regularly refuel in Costa Rica at contra camps. The latter two claimed they took drugs out of Columbia and returned with arms, which they delivered to the southern contras by landing at the private airstrip of rancher John Hull, a U.S. citizen with well-known ties to the CIA. Convicted Medellin Cartel money launderer Ramon Milian Rodriguez testified he delivered approximately $10 million to the contras.[200]

Kerry's hearings had many problems. First, the majority of his testimony came from crime figures, most of who were convicts. Despite the similarities of their stories,

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[199] Newsweek, May 23, 1988.

[200] The Nation, April 30, 1988.

there was no smoking gun to prove the sensational charges. Second, since the hearings were public, Kerry could not divulge classified information that might have been in his possession. As one aid told The Nation, "The issue is how Kerry can get the maximum amount of information out without generating a political reaction that will cause everything to end up with the Intelligence Committee and closed hearings."[201] Kerry had to abandon many leads presumably because they led to classified CIA fronts and assets. Kerry went out on a limb. To be sure, a number of the allegations made at the hearings had first appeared in the press, and some reporters continued to follow up on charges made at the hearings. But in Congress, Kerry's investigation was fraught with problems and most members of Congress kept an arm's length. In an election year, the Kerry hearings carried too much potential risk of coming across as partisan, despite the lengths to which Kerry sought to avoid that image. Some of the allegations that emerged led to the office of Vice President Bush, then the front-runner in the race for the Republican nomination for president. No one stood to gain more from such allegations than the man who had made John Kerry his running mate in 1982, the front-runner in the Democratic race for president, Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis.

The Presidential Candidate: Michael S.Dukakis and Central America

After generating a stir in the spring of 1988, Kerry's hearings quietly wound down. As the 1988 presidential campaign took on momentum, however, suspicions of inappropriate ties between Republican nominee George Bush and Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega continued to surface. The issue of Central America remained

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[201] *Ibid.*

in the headlines, but Ronald Reagan's drive to topple the Sandinstas had suffered a serious setback due to the Iran-Contra affair. Furthermore, a peace proposal made by Costa Rican president Oscar Arias had grown into a peace process known as Esquipulas in which Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, El Salvador and Costa Rica agreed to work toward regional stability and internal reconciliation. In 1987, Congress vastly reduced contra aid, and limited their appropriation to itemized lists of non-lethal aid. In 1988, Congress failed to pass even a modest proposal for humanitarian aid, and the contras began peace talks with the Sandinistas who wished to put the war behind them so they could try to revive the seriously ailing Nicaraguan economy prior to the 1990 elections required by Esquipulas.[202]

Michael Dukakis won the 1988 race for the Democratic nomination in a race against several prominent Democrats such as Senator Al Gore, Jr. of Tennessee, Representative Richard Gephard of Missouri and activist Rev. Jesse Jackson, who campaigned against Dukakis from the left and proved his most serious challenger. Dukakis sought to portray himself as a good government progressive and a skilled technocrat rather than a traditional "liberal". In many ways, this was an accurate description. As governor between 1973 and 1979, Dukakis had rooted out a good deal of corruption but infuriated old school liberals who accused him of balancing the budget on the backs of the poor through draconian welfare cuts. In his second term, he softened his image, but made his name nationally through the success of modest programs in job training for the unemployed and a program to increase the collection of delinquent taxes. His image as a skillful economic administrator benefited from a high tech boom,

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[202] LeoGrande, 514-32.

especially around the Route 128 corridor near Boston that helped fuel his much-ballyhooed "Massachusetts Miracle".[203]

It was in other areas, however, that Dukakis earned his reputation as a liberal, almost all of which were the focus of grass roots activism in the 1970s and 1980s. Dukakis had responded to the movement against nuclear power by refusing to dispatch state troopers to New Hampshire during the 1977 Seabrook direct action protests. In the mid-1980s, the governor held up the Seabrook plant from going online by refusing to submit an evacuation plan. Dukakis had embraced the nuclear weapons freeze movement by publicly endorsing the freeze resolution, refusing to take part in federal crisis relocation planning, appointing an Advisory Committee on the Impact of the Nuclear Arms Race on Massachusetts and condemning the arms race as insane.

During the 1988 campaign, the area where Dukakis stood closest to his past liberalism was Central America. Dukakis' opposition to the Reagan administration's policies in Central America was probably stronger, and more deeply rooted than his opposition to nuclear power or even the arms race. The source of that opposition grew out of Michael Dukakis' personal experience and was reinforced by the solidarity activism that flourished in the Bay State during the 1980s.

Much of Michael Dukakis' outlook on politics was shaped during his student years at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania in the early 1950s. The Quaker college was an oasis of liberalism, pacifism and tolerance during the age of McCarthyism. Generally, Dukakis gravitated toward good government types such as Adlai Stevenson,

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[203] Richard Gaines and Michael Segal, Dukakis and the Reform Impulse (Boston: Quintan Press, 1987).

but a trip to Latin America in 1954 moved the young man's views of U.S. foreign policy considerably toward the left. Dukakis received a summer fellowship to study at the University of San Marcos in Peru. He arrived in June at a university that was a hotbed of politics. As Dukakis later recalled, "...it just so happens that 1954 was the year the United States government overthrew the popularly elected government in Guatemala."[204] Dukakis watched the overthrow of Jacobo Arbenz from a much different vantage point than those in the U.S., whose views were largely shaped by the anti-communist fulminations of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and the publicity campaign of the United Fruit Company. According to Dukakis, "Everyone in Latin America knew that the United States was in the process of overthrowing the democratically elected government of Guatemala."[205] Dukakis discussed this formative experience in numerous speeches during his presidential campaign. In a speech entitled, "Building a New Partnership for the Americas" at the City Club of Chicago, Dukakis said:

> During the summer of 1954, I had the opportunity to live with a wonderful family in Lima, Peru and to study at the oldest university in our hemisphere. That's where I learned to respect the Latin American people and their history and culture. It's where I learned to speak Spanish. And it's where I first confronted the inconsistencies in our policies towards our neighbors to the south. For it was in 1954 that the United States government, operating right out of the Embassy in Guatemala City, engineered the overthrow of the democratically elected government of Guatemala... The result of the U.S. directed military coup in Guatemala was thirty years of the most brutal repression any country in this hemisphere has ever endured. In this century, the United States has mounted nineteen major military expeditions to Latin America. Five times, we sent troops to Honduras. The marines occupied Nicaragua for twenty years. And we helped overthrow a democratically-elected

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[204] Charles Kenney and Robert L. Turner, Dukakis: An American Odyssey (Boston: Haughton Mifflin Co., 1988) 38.

[205] New Republic, May 23, 1988.

> government not only in Guatemala, but in Chile in 1973. Every time, we did so in the name of democracy and freedom. And almost without exception, the legacy of our intervention has been tyranny, not freedom.[206]

During 1954, Dukakis had also been taken aback by what he saw in Peru itself. Peru was ruled by dictator Manuel A. Odria, who was popular with the Eisenhower administration but not with many Peruvians. Dukakis recalled the dread inspired by the U.S. supported military, "those troops with the German bucket helmets."[207] He was also moved by the deep poverty he witnessed throughout the region, recalling, "There was incredible poverty in Latin America in the face of tremendous wealth at the top... I have never gotten over walking through the squatters sections in Lima: people living in shacks and in the sides of mountains, people literally living in holes."[208]

In the 1980s, Dukakis was not persuaded by the Reagan administration's argument that Soviet subversion was the main source of unrest and revolution in Central America. Further, Dukakis believed that what he described as Reagan's "trigger-happy, reach-for-your gun, communist-under-every-bed ideology" would lead the U.S. to war.[209] Dukakis condemned the administration's contra policy as "illegal and immoral".[210] He denounced the contras as "thugs and mercenaries" and charged, "Our

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[206] Michael Dukakis, "Building a New Partnership for the Americas", City Club of Chicago, September 17, 1987. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 6, Folder 324.

[207] Kenney and Turner, 39.

[208] *Ibid.*

[209] *Ibid.*

[210] New York Times, April 3, 1988.

tax dollars [have been] used to blow up health clinics and farm cooperatives."[211] Instead, Dukakis argued the U.S. would achieve its objectives "... not by overthrowing governments we don't happen to agree with, not by cozying up to Latin American dictators as we have so often done over the past century, but by demonstrating every day... the powerful force of our ideals."[212]

As governor, Dukakis expressed his opposition to U.S. policy in the region directly to the Reagan administration itself. In 1985, amidst the Nicaraguan embargo crisis, Dukakis wrote to Jayne Plank, Reagan's Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, to express his strong opposition to administration policies. "I believe that what the Administration is trying to do in Nicaragua is both morally and legally indefensible and I think you and the President are entitled to know why," Dukakis wrote.[213] Dukakis drew attention to the 1947 Rio Treaty: "The Rio Treaty was not an insignificant event. Coming after decades of U.S. interventionism... it was a major event in the history of U.S.-Latin American relations." Dukakis pointed out that Article 18 of the Organization of American States prohibited the use of armed force to intervene in the internal affairs of member states, adding, "The language of Article 18 is clear and unequivocal. It does not say that it can be waived when we don't like the government of a particular Latin American nation. It does not say that it applies in the case of a right wing dictatorship, but has no effect if the dictatorship is of the left." Dukakis denounced the interventions in Guatemala and Chile, and declared, "Today, Guatemala has one of the most

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[211] New Republic, May 23, 1988.

[212] *Ibid.*

[213] Michael S. Dukakis to Jayne Plank, April 23, 1985. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 282.

repressive regimes in the hemisphere – one, I might add, so brutal that it makes Sandinista violations of civil liberties look like a Sunday School picnic by comparison." Dukakis concluded, "I hope the Administration will abandon this foolhardy and lawless course. I hope it will consider seriously the proposals for peace with which Senators Harkin and Kerry returned from Nicaragua." Dukakis sent copies of his letter to President Reagan, Secretary of State George Schultz and each member of the Massachusetts congressional delegation.[214]

By early 1986, Dukakis confronted an issue facing a growing number of governors; namely, whether to send the state's National Guard to Honduras to take part in military exercises. The Defense Department argued that the exercises were done to acclimate Guard troops to the type of environment they might have to fight in one day, but many critics of administration policy argued that the deployment of the National Guard was part of an ongoing campaign to intimidate the Sandinistas, and that much of the Guard's work while in Honduras consisted of building roads near the Nicaraguan border that could be used for a U.S. invasion. Dukakis asked his staff to look into legal grounds for refusing to comply with the federal order. An aide reported to the governor that "except in time of war or national emergency, a member of the National Guard may not be ordered to active duty without the consent of the Governor."[215] The memo pointed at that for the president to federalize the National Guard of any state, one of three conditions needed to be met: 1) an invasion or danger of invasion by a foreign nation; 2)

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[214] *Ibid.*

[215] Timothy Barnicle to Governor Michael S. Dukakis, February 18, 1986. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign papers, Manuscript 32, Box 5, Folder 282.

rebellion or danger of rebellion against the Government of the United States; or 3) the President is unable to execute the laws of the United States with regular forces.[216]

Dukakis and several other governors decried what they saw as an unwarranted politicization of the National Guard. While acknowledging the right of the federal government to call up state National Guards for operations, they argued that the administration, by deploying the National Guard for "training" was bypassing Congress. Arizona governor Bruce Babbitt wrote, "The president wants the freedom to conduct military operations without the nuisance of debate and Congress wants to spare itself the responsibility for stopping him."[217] Maine's Democratic governor Joseph E. Brennan refused to send his state's National Guard, stating, "Basically, I don't believe Honduras is a very safe place to train. Secondly, I personally do not happen to agree with our Central American policy. I think we're inching our way into another Vietnam."[218]

Michael Dukakis decided in 1986 to refuse to send the state's National Guard to Honduras as well. A Dukakis spokesperson stated, "These are citizen-soldiers, and they ought not to be placed into a potentially dangerous situation on allegedly friendly training exercises... If the U.S. wants to send troops into Central America, that ought to be something that the president asks the Congress and the Congress debates and votes on... Barring that, I don't think there ought to be this subterfuge of sending Guard units down from the various states."[219] In a few states, decisions by the governor to keep the

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[216] *Ibid.*

[217] New York Times, September 16, 1986.

[218] Washington Post, April 5, 1986.

[219] *Ibid.*

Guard home resulted in tensions with Guard commanders and troops, who regarded a trip to Honduras as an adventure. Massachusetts National Guard spokesman Lt. Col. Donald Consolmagno was more conciliatory, stating, "I would never say the governor made the wrong decision. He's the commander in chief, and we as good soldiers carry out the policies and directives of the commander in chief."[220]

In late 1986, Congress passed an amendment by Mississippi Democrat G.V Montgomery, stating that governors could not withhold troops from exercises unless there was an emergency in the state. The National Guard dispute took on something of a federal *vs.* states rights dimension, and created some tension between governors and Congress. The 1986 National Governors' Association meeting adopted a resolution reaffirming governors' right to control National Guard training in peacetime.[221] Minnesota's Democratic governor Rudy Perpica then decided to challenge the new law in court, arguing that although the federal government could call out the militia, the training of the Guard was still vested in the states. Massachusetts, Maine, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Kansas, Ohio, Rhode Island, Vermont and Iowa joined Minnesota in its suit. When a U.S. District Court upheld the Montgomery Amendment, Dukakis appealed the decision, declaring, "Today's decision is unfortunate but it is not the end of the battle to reaffirm the right of each governor to be responsible for the training of his or her state militia in peacetime."[222] Dukakis added, "The Reagan

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[220] *Ibid.*

[221] Mark Gearan, Pat Branch and Susan Jacobson to Michael S. Dukakis, October 30, 1986. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 6, Folder 342.

[222] "Dukakis and Shannon to Appeal National Guard Decision", News Release from the Office of Governor Michael S. Dukakis, May 6, 1988. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 6, Folder 342.

Administration is using National Guard training in Central America as part of an ill-advised and illegal strategy to overthrow the Nicaraguan government."[223] Dukakis and other governors lost the appeal. In the summer of 1987, Federal District Court Judge Donald Alsop ruled that states had no right to withhold the National Guard and Congress could exercise authority over state Guards as part of the federal reserve system, including training.[224] The governors lost, but government resistance to the Reagan administration's Central American policies that had begun with cities passing sanctuary laws had now reached a state level.

When Dukakis announced his intention to run for president, he was better known nationally for his innovative economic policies as governor than for his stands on nuclear power, the arms race or U.S. intervention in Central America. Nevertheless, his liberal positions on these issues helped him in the primaries, and especially when it came to Central America, Dukakis appealed to activist elements in the party. At Marquette University, Dukakis proclaimed, "I want to build a Central America that is free from civil wars and secret wars... where our energy and our resources are devoted to building and educating and investing, not killing and sabotaging and tearing down."[225] Dukakis quickly became the Democratic front-runner. By the early summer of 1988, all other contenders except Jesse Jackson dropped out. On July 20, 1988, Governor Bill Clinton of Arkansas nominated Michael Dukakis for president at the Democratic Convention in

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[223] *Ibid.*

[224] New York Times, August 5, 1987.

[225] Michael S. Dukakis, "A Partnership for Peace and Democracy in Central America", Marquette University, March 30, 1988. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 6, Folder 324.

Atlanta. Although Jackson had no chance of winning the nomination, William Winpinsinger, head of the International Association of Machinists, nominated the civil rights veteran. Winpinsinger had been active in the freeze movement, the campaign against nuclear energy and the movement against U.S. intervention in Central America.[226] For many social activists on the left, Jesse Jackson was the Democrat who most embodied their ideals. Throughout the 1980s, Jackson's Rainbow Coalition worked to build bridges between movements for civil rights and minority empowerment, and the predominantly white environmental and peace movements.[227] In 1988, Jackson called for an end to U.S. intervention in the Third World and a five-year freeze on military spending.[228]

Dukakis, by contrast, sought to move toward the center of the foreign policy spectrum. To be sure, the governor continued to oppose numerous weapons systems and called for deep cuts in the Reagan administration's SDI program ("Star Wars"); yet, Dukakis surrounded himself with "defense Democrats" such as Madelaine Albright and Joseph Nye and endorsed the D-5 Trident missile, the Stealth and B-1 bombers and called for an expansion of conventional forces.[229] In a speech in Dallas, Texas entitled, "Building a Strong Defense", Dukakis sought to synthesize his advocacy of a strong conventional defense with his opposition to the nuclear arms race: "We know if it is necessary to use military force, it will almost certainly be our conventional forces, rather

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[226] New York Times, July 21, 1988.

[227] Sheila D. Jackson, The Jackson Campaign and the Future of U.S. Politics (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1986).

[228] New York Times, July 21, 1988.

[229] New Republic, May 23, 1988.

than our nuclear forces that will be tested... We need a strong nuclear deterrent. We have a strong nuclear deterrent. But we also need strong conventional forces if we are serious about reducing the risk of nuclear war..."[230]

Dukakis rarely distanced himself from his positions on Central America, however, and wove references to the issue throughout his campaign speeches. Early in his acceptance speech in Atlanta, the Democratic nominee proclaimed:

> It's time to understand that the greatest threat to our national security in this hemisphere is not the Sandinistas – it's the avalanche of drugs that is pouring into this country and poisoning our kids... Because this election is not about ideology. It's about competence. It's not about overthrowing governments in Central America; it's about creating jobs in middle America.[231]

As his running mate, Dukakis opted for a traditional ideological and geographical ticket balancing strategy, and chose moderate Texas Senator Lloyd Bentson. On several issues, most notably Central America, there was a large ideological chasm between the two. Bentson had called the Sandinistas "violent revolutionaries... dedicated to spreading their brand of communism anywhere they can reach."[232] The Republican ticket of George Bush and Indiana Congressman Dan Quayle sought to accentuate the difference between the Democratic running mates, but were somewhat encumbered by the fact that their advisors had told them to play down the issue of contra aid, which remained unpopular with the public.[233]

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[230] Michael S. Dukakis, "Building a Strong Conventional Defense", Dallas, Texas, November 13, 1987. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 4, Folder 248.

[231] New York Times, July 22, 1988.

[232] New York Times, August 3, 1988.

[233] *Ibid.*

The presidential campaign of 1988 was one of the most negative in recent memory. Bush campaign manager Lee Atwater undertook an aggressive campaign strategy to paint Dukakis as a "card carrying member of the ACLU" who furloughed black rapist Willie Horton, banned the Pledge of Allegiance and was a "McGovern Democrat" on defense. The Dukakis campaign fully anticipated the Bush campaign's strategy. Dukakis's staff scoured the Boston Globe for the past three decades in search of anything that could be used against the governor. In one memo, an aid wrote, "Terry Bergman told us that our aim should be to uncover or shed new light on incidents in Michael Dukakis's career that might help members of the Bush campaign typecast the governor as a radical liberal, as she believed they would."[234] The staff member covering the early 1970s reported "very little… about the future governor, and certainly nothing that could be cited as support for the view that Dukakis is a dangerous left-leaning radical."[235]

But the campaign expected trouble when it came to Dukakis's second term as governor and the issue of Central America. The campaign put together charges anticipated by the Bush campaign and responses for the governor. The practice charges pulled no punches:

> FACTS: MSD for the past five years has worked with the Boston Coordinating Council on Central America – a left-leaning coalition of U.S.-based ecumenical and political solidarity groups. His work with them included proclamations on Central America Day and endorsement of a November 6, 1984 referendum they put together. The groups are committed to a variety of causes, including disarmament, non-

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[234] Jim Schwartz, "Report on My Research on Old Issues of the Boston Globe", July 8, 1988. Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers. Manuscript 32, Box 6, Folder 362.

[235] *Ibid.*

> interventionist American policy and Third World revolution... [The groups include] the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), a solidarity group that essentially endorses the Salvadoran guerrilla platform. The group was a target of an FBI investigation [that] uncovered plans to aid the guerrillas in El Salvador.
> CHARGE: Mike Dukakis's collection of leftist causes includes American groups like CISPES, which has openly endorsed the Salvadoran guerrillas' agenda, and even a Salvadoran labor union almost certainly tied to the guerrillas.
> RESPONSE: Mike Dukakis has always made a point of talking with many different groups and organizations to get a thorough view of any issue. These groups were among the organizations involved in Latin American policy in Massachusetts... In no case has there been illegal activity. The same cannot be said of vice-president Bush, whose government paid out $200,000 to a drug-smuggling Panamanian dictator.[236]

The Bush campaign generally sought to put some distance between itself and the current administration on Central America. Lawrence Walsh hadn't directly implicated the vice president in the Iran-Contra affair, but leads did indicate Bush might have been more involved than he claimed.[237] Although the Bush campaign challenged Dukakis on his Central American policies, it did so only half-heartedly. Americans had grown exhausted with a decade of proxy war in Central America that had shown few results and led to the biggest political scandal since Watergate.

The race between George Bush and Michael Dukakis came to hinge far more on symbolism than issues. Bush campaign manager Lee Atwater devised a strategy that portrayed Dukakis as a radical liberal who furloughed black rapists, stood against the Pledge of Allegiance and was a "card carrying member of the ACLU". Dukakis's failure

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[236] "Central American Groups", *circa* July 1988. This and several similar documents anticipating charges against Dukakis along with responses can be found in the Michael S. Dukakis Presidential Campaign Papers, Manuscript 32, Box 4, Folder 229 and Box 6, Folder 326.

[237] Walsh.

to aggressively counter the attacks hurt the campaign. His continued insistence that the campaign was about competence not ideology alienated the Democratic Party base and left uncommitted voters cold. Dukakis acquitted himself well in the debates, but his technocratic demeanor came across as aloof and distant to an electorate used to the charismatic Ronald Reagan.

One can attribute the desultory results of the 1988 Dukakis campaign to many factors. Whatever the cause, many saw the ill-fated Dukakis campaign as the last hurrah of post-1960s "Massachusetts liberalism" in the same way as the 1984 Mondale campaign marked the demise of the old blue collar New Deal liberalism. By 1988, the moniker "liberal" had become stigmatized. After 1988, the centrist, southern-based wing of the party led by Al Fromm's Democratic Leadership Council increasingly took control of the Democratic Party. In 1992, self-proclaimed "New Democrat" Bill Clinton took back the White House for the Democrats for the first time in twelve years.

But if Michael Dukakis sought to distance himself from the liberal label during the campaign, the vice president in a similar fashion attempted to put distance between himself and the zealous ideological conservatism of his predecessor. By 1988, the "Reagan revolution" had run out of steam. As early as 1986, ideological conservatives in the Republican Party grumbled as Reagan undertook serious arms control with Mikhail Gorbachev. It was the Iran-Contra Affair, however, that gave the *coup de grace* to the rightward thrust of the Reagan years. Popular use of the term "Contragate" conjured up memories of Watergate, and although Reagan, unlike Nixon, was not forced from office, there were many similarities. Both Watergate and the Iran-Contra Affair ultimately came down to the imperial presidency clashing with a left-liberal opposition movement. Just

as the illegal wiretaps that grew into Watergate began with Richard Nixon's desire to conceal illegal U.S. military incursions into Cambodia in the face of a powerful antiwar movement, so too did the illegal arms sales to Iran and money transfers to the contras grow out of the Boland amendment, which was an expression of the solidarity movement's impact on Congress. And as with the Nixon administration, numerous Reagan administration officials were convicted of illegal activity. John Poindexter, Robert McFarland, Oliver North and Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger were only a few of the Reagan administration officials convicted for illegal activities, including deceiving Congress. As one of his final gestures as President, George Bush issued pardons to all the convicted and accused Iran-Contra conspirators.[238]

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[238] Walsh; Kornbluh and Byrne. Oliver North had his conviction overturned on a technicality.

CONCLUSION

The End of a Decade

In the spring of 1989, trucks carrying material aid for El Salvador set out from Boston, Detroit and Vancouver on a cross-country journey to converge on San Antonio, Texas before continuing to El Salvador. Traveling with the Boston convoy was Robert Wilson, an employee of a Springfield, Massachusetts software firm who had spent six weeks raising $4,000 across western Massachusetts. Along the way, the solidarity activists stayed at homeless shelters and women's shelters, gathering national publicity for their cause. Their mission was to deliver $3 million worth of humanitarian aid to help recovery efforts from the 1986 earthquake. According to Wilson, "[The U.S. government] is sending all kinds of money to El Salvador and it's not helping the people it's meant to help. It's being misused, stolen and expropriated by the military."[1]

From San Antonio, the caravan of eighteen trucks and forty solidarity activists began a trek through Central America. The trip through Mexico was peaceful, but their welcome in Guatemala far less sympathetic. A military escort accompanied the activists across the country and left them just inside the Salvadoran border, where they were soon stranded. The caravan had hoped to enter El Salvador before the spring elections, when the FMLN announced a transport stoppage ("*paro*") to protest the vote. "We broke our necks to get there before the *paro*," Wilson told a reporter.[2] As days went on, the difficulty was no longer the rebels, but the hostile Salvadoran government. Wilson later

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[1] Greenfield Recorder, April 8, 1989.

[2] *Ibid.*

said, "I assume the U.S. embassy and the Salvadorans conspired to keep us out of the country. It was mean spirited. They wanted us to rot and they did not want us in El Salvador."[3]

Unbeknownst to Wilson, Congressman Silvio Conte learned of the caravan's plight and sent letters of concern to the U.S. and Salvadoran governments. Eventually, the reluctant Salvadoran government allowed the caravan to complete its journey and deliver the aid. Back in Massachusetts, Wilson wrote to thank Conte: "While I was in El Salvador, I had no idea if my own family, never mind my Congressman, knew of my troubles there."[4] Conte's intercession on Wilson's behalf symbolized the close relationship the western Massachusetts Republican had developed with his activist constituents over the course of a decade. Conte and solidarity activists from the First District had reached a mutual acceptance despite the solidarity movement's unconditional opposition to the Salvadoran government and Conte's qualified support. The common ground was their mutual concern for human rights.

As the decade wound to a close, Conte's constituents called upon him one more time on behalf of human rights in El Salvador. Robert Wilson wrote to Conte seeking his help in preventing the deportation of a Salvadoran woman named America Sosa.[5] In July 1989, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) arrested Sosa at a Washington, D.C. church. Sosa headed a Salvadoran organization called COMADRES (Committee of Mothers and Relatives of Political Prisoners, Disappeared and Assassinated People of El

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[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Robert Wilson to Silvio O. Conte, June 8, 1989. "Silvio O. Conte Papers", Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "COMADRES", MS 371, Subgroup II, Special Collections and Archives, W.E.B. DuBois Library, University of Massachusetts, Amherst (Hereinafter cited as SOC Papers).

[5] *Ibid.*

Salvador). Sosa was a garment factory worker whose husband had been mistakenly arrested by the Salvadoran military and killed while in prison. Fearing for her life, Sosa came to the U.S. and spoke across the country on behalf of COMADRES. Months before her arrest, she had spoken to western Massachusetts audiences as part of Robert Wilson's fundraising campaign. Although COMADRES was formed in 1978 under the auspices of Archbishop Oscar Romero, the U.S. government considered it sympathetic to the rebels and now sought to deport Sosa. But the organization won the hearts of human rights supporters and in 1984 received the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Memorial Award. Said one solidarity activist of Sosa, "She is the Sojourner Truth of El Salvador."[6]

Conte received numerous letters regarding America Sosa and met with Wilson and other western Massachusetts activists regarding the case. Conte sent a letter to the INS on behalf of America Sosa's appeal for political asylum.[7] He wrote, "The problems that the Sosa family and COMADRES have encountered since 1978 are, we believe, sufficient to demonstrate that she faces genuine threats to her safety if she is forced to return to El Salvador."[8] Conte then sent a "Dear Colleague" letter to members of Congress inviting them to a forum on the Sosa case to be held in his office, where members of Amnesty International and America's Watch briefed the lawmakers on the Sosa case and human rights in El Salvador.[9] Conte also used the forum to solicit support

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[6] USA Today, March 30, 1989; Greenfield Recorder, April 4, 1989; Berkshire Eagle, May 21, 1989.

[7] Draft Letter: SOC to INS, August 7, 1989, Series 3e,Box 64, Folder: "COMADRES", MS 371, Subgroup II. SOC Papers.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Draft: SOC "Dear Colleague" letter, July 17, 1989, Series 3e, Box 64, Folder: "COMADRES", MS 371, Subgroup II. SOC Papers.

for a bill he was sponsoring that would prevent the deportations of Salvadorans or Nicaraguans seeking asylum in the United States.[10] Letters of thanks streamed into Conte's office. An Amherst resident wrote, "I just want to express my appreciation for your efforts, which... go beyond just support to the realm of leadership."[11] Sara Ciborski of Great Barrington, speaking for the Committee on Central America, told the Berkshire Eagle, "We're very pleased that he's taking this action. It's a wonderful step he's taking."[12] The letters of thanks differed dramatically from the angry letters that flooded Conte's office in the spring of 1981 when Conte had cast his deciding vote in support of military aid to El Salvador. The combined efforts of Conte and the national solidarity movement on America Sosa's behalf paid off. In the summer of 1990, the INS judge hearing the case surprised everyone by ruling in Sosa's behalf.[13]

While Conte labored on behalf of America Sosa, the 1980s ended in El Salvador almost exactly as it had begun. In November 1989, the FMLN launched a massive "Final Offensive", and for the first time since early 1981, held several large sections of San Salvador. The offensive revealed more support for the Marxist rebels in the capital than the U.S. or Salvadoran government expected, but not enough to spark an uprising that would topple the government, as the rebels hoped. The Salvadoran military extricated

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[10] Union News, July 21, 1989.

[11] Albert S. Woodhull to SOC, July 22, 1989, Series 3c, Box 64, Folder: "COMADRES", MS 371, Subgroup II. SOC Papers.

[12] Berkshire Eagle, undated newspaper clipping, *circa* July 1989, Series 3c, Box 64, Folder: "COMADRES", MS 371, Subgroup II. SOC Papers.

[13] America Sosa to SOC, July 25, 1990, Series 3c, Box 64, Folder: "COMADRES", MS 371, Subgroup II. SOC Papers.

the FMLN from their positions in the city only by massive and indiscriminate artillery barrages that caused wide spread casualties among the civilian population.[14]

The offensive also triggered a paroxysm of death squad killings, which had leveled off since 1984. During the offensive, the world learned of the murder of six Jesuit priests, their cook and her fifteen-year old daughter at the University of Central America on the outskirts of San Salvador. They had been pulled from their beds, shot execution style, their brains removed from their skulls and left on display on the grounds outside their dormitory. The Jesuits openly sympathized with the poor, embraced tenants of Liberation Theology, and had worked to promote a negotiated end to the war. They were bitterly resented by officers in the Salvadoran military. Many members of the U.S. Congress had known the Jesuits personally. Several of the Jesuits were internationally known authors and had met with members of Congress in Washington, D.C., and at the University of Central America where many congressional delegations had stayed during fact-finding missions over the previous decade. Recently elected Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani, who had worked to disassociate the ARENA party image from Roberto D'Aubuisson and the death squads, now implied the killings were the work of the leftist rebels seeking to discredit the government. U.S. Ambassador William Walker gave credit to the insinuations.[15]

Witnesses who identified the Salvadoran military as the guilty party were joined by a low-ranking U.S. Army officer who reported hearing high-ranking Salvadoran officers claim responsibility for the act. The murders of the Jesuits propelled one final

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[14] William LeoGrande, Our Own Backyard: The United States in Central America, 1977-1992 (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 568-72.

[15] *Ibid.*; New York Times, November 17, 1989, 1.

Massachusetts congressman to the fore on Central America. Speaker of the House Tom Foley (D-WA) appointed a Special Task Force on El Salvador to investigate the killings. Foley appointed Representative Joe Moakley as chair of the Task Force. Moakley represented the Catholic working class district of South Boston.[16] Throughout the 1980s, he had kept a low profile on foreign affairs. Moakley now played a key role in helping to end El Salvador's decade long civil war.[17]

Moakley set out on his investigation with a zeal fueled by his Catholic faith. Further, Moakley had known two of the Jesuits personally. He said, "Up until their murders, I never personally knew anyone who was killed in El Salvador. Because they were friends, I am especially outraged at the brutal nature of their deaths. I grieve for them."[18] Moakley's Task Force visited El Salvador, interviewed witnesses and pushed up against obstruction by the Salvadoran government and reluctant cooperation by the U.S. Embassy. All evidence pointed in the direction of Colonel Guillermo Alfredo Benavides. In May, Moakley denounced what he described as a cover-up by the Salvadoran military and declared the investigation at a "virtual standstill". On South Boston streets, constituents yelled their support to Moakley: "Don't let those guys murder priests and get away with it!" and "Get the Jesuit killers!" Moakley told a New York Times reporter, "It used to be there wasn't half a vote in the El Salvador issue. Then they killed the Jesuits."[19]

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[16] New York Times, January 16, 1990, 8.

[17] LeoGrande, 571-5.

[18] Boston Globe, November 14, 1990, 3.

[19] New York Times, August 23, 1990.

As the investigation reached an impasse, Moakley enlisted in the effort by Christopher Dodd (D-CT) and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) to cut military aid to El Salvador by fifty-percent. The Dodd-Leahy bill sought to promote negotiations by requiring the elimination of the remaining military aid should the Salvadoran government refuse to negotiate and the restoration of the eliminated aid should the FMLN launch an offensive. Moakley took to the floor of the House and proclaimed, "Enough is enough. The time to act has come. They killed six priests in cold blood. I stood on the ground where my friends were blown away by men to whom the sanctity of human life bears no meaning."[20] To the astonishment of the Salvadoran military, the House voted 250-163 for the Dodd-Leahy bill. Moakley said after the vote, "You know what really bothers me? If some Speaker had organized a task force when Archbishop Romero was killed to challenge the administration, the aid could have been cut a long time ago."[21]

In 1991, the Cristiani government and the FMLN began negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations. As the cold war drew to a close, congressional pressure on the Salvadoran military and pressure by Latin American governments on the rebels kept the negotiations moving. In early 1992, a peace accord was signed. The Salvadoran military would be cut in half and purged of human rights violators. The FMLN would be disarmed under U.N. supervision and integrated into the Salvadoran police force. A U.N. "Truth Commission" was to investigate atrocities from a decade of civil war. In early 1992, a Salvadoran court convicted two officers for the murder of the Jesuit priests, their cook and her daughter. Col. Benavides was convicted of ordering the murders. The

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[20] LeoGrande, 574.

[21] New York Times, August 23, 1990.

convicted officers were sentenced to thirty years. Seven other officers who were widely believed to be involved were acquitted. Still, the convictions marked the halting end of the era of military impunity in El Salvador.[22]

The negotiated settlement in El Salvador brought to a close one of the darkest chapters of the cold war's final decade. Over 80,000 Salvadorans, mostly civilians, died in the civil war. Over 30,000 Nicaraguans died during the U.S. sponsored contra war. Tens of thousands died in Guatemala.[23] The solidarity movement, by keeping alive the fears of another Vietnam and civil unrest at home, had helped prevent a full scale U.S invasion of El Salvador or Nicaragua. The Massachusetts congressional delegation to Congress had put up the strongest opposition of any state delegation to the Reagan administration's policies in Central America. Constrained by the "Vietnam syndrome" from intervening more directly, the Reagan administration pursued a policy of proxy war and low-intensity warfare. The Sandinistas survived the contra war only to go down to narrow defeat in the 1990 elections. And the U.S. never achieved its long sought military victory over the Marxist rebels in El Salvador. In the end, only negotiations could end the deadly stalemate in that long-suffering land. As the cold war ended, Central America lost its significance for the U.S. During the 1990s, the U.S. disengaged from Central America, dramatically cutting all forms of aid and leaving the region to recover from a decade of war largely on its own.[24]

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[22] LeoGrande, 575-9.

[23] *Ibid.*, 582-3.

[24] *Ibid.*, 585.

The End of an Era and a "New World Order"

During the 1980s, the United States supported a panoply of undemocratic movements and regimes in pursuit of its global objectives. To counter the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the U.S. supported the Islamic *mujaheddin;* to oppose the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, the U.S. supported the deposed Maoist Khmer Rouge, responsible for the "killing fields" of the 1970s. In 1989, President George Bush ordered an invasion of Panama to topple the dictator Manuel Noriega, a long-time U.S. client, on charges of drug smuggling, although the reason was more likely that the erratic dictator was now viewed as an unreliable custodian of the Panama Canal. In August 1990, Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. During the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s, the U.S. had worked to build up the Iraqi regime as a bulwark against the Islamic fundamentalism of Iran, which was viewed as a threat to the oil kingdoms of the Persian Gulf. Now George Bush deployed 500,000 U.S. troops to Saudi Arabia as the bulk of an international coalition to oust Iraq from Kuwait.[25]

A large activist movement grew in the United States in opposition to the impending war in the Gulf, taking up the rallying cry, "No Blood for Oil!" Bush had set a January 15, 1991 deadline for Iraq to leave Kuwait, vowing to go to war with or without congressional approval. Three days before the deadline, Congress finished days of impassioned debate to vote on whether to continue economic sanctions on Iraq or to endorse a war resolution. Echoing the antiwar movement, Senator Kennedy proclaimed, "Not a single American life should be sacrificed in a war for the price of oil."[26] The

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[25] Walter LaFeber, America, Russia and the Cold War, 1945-2000 (New York: McGraw Hill, 2002).

[26] Boston Globe, January 13, 1991.

House approved the war resolution 250-183 and the Senate passed it 52-47. Going into the vote, the only member of the Massachusetts delegation who remained a question mark was Silvio Conte.[27] On the day of the vote, Conte joined the rest of the Massachusetts delegation and only two other Republicans in voting against the authorization to go to war, making Massachusetts, fittingly, the only state delegation to cast all its votes against the war. It was one of the last votes Conte was to cast in his four decades in Congress.[28] On February 8, 1991, Silvio Conte died from a blood clot in the right side of his brain. His vote against the war resolution helped cement the affection many western Massachusetts activists had begrudgingly developed for the maverick Republican.[29]

The successful war against Iraq, at the cost of fewer than 150 U.S. lives, led to a tidal wave of patriotism. Yellow ribbons and U.S. flags adorned front yards across America and George Bush's popularity ratings passed eighty-percent. Bush proclaimed a "New World Order", one in which the U.S. would shape the post-cold war world. In early March, still basking in the glow of victory, the president declared, "By God we've killed the Vietnam syndrome once and for all."[30] For a decade and a half, advocates of an interventionist foreign policy chafed at the constraints the Vietnam syndrome placed on U.S. president's ability to deploy troops around the world. As William LeoGrande observed, "We went to war in Central America to exorcise the ghosts of Vietnam and

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[27] Boston Globe, January 12, 1991.

[28] Boston Globe, January 13, 1991.

[29] Boston Globe, February, 1991.

[30] Newsweek, March 11, 1991.

renew the national will to use force abroad."[31] Although the American public would most certainly not countenance the body count in U.S. lives that occurred during the Vietnam War, the Gulf War of 1991 did open up a new era of U.S. willingness to assert its military might around the world.

The Vietnam syndrome, however, entailed far more than fear of incurring large casualties in a military misadventure abroad. The war in Vietnam had broken the cold war consensus and called into question American institutions. To be sure, the civil rights movement was the progenitor of 1960s activism and the training ground for a whole generation of activists. But unlike the victories of the civil rights movement, which in many ways was the culmination of post-World War II liberalism, the war in Vietnam, over time, legitimated the radical left which in turn affected a split in cold war liberalism. The war in Vietnam produced a whole new generation of liberals who came to Congress in the early 1970s determined to prevent any replay of the Vietnam War and to steer the nation in a new direction. In 1982, Congressman Gerry Studds took part in one of his many adversarial exchanges with Secretary of State Alexander Haig , during hearings on El Salvador by the House Foreign Affairs committee. The interchange, as so many before, turned to Vietnam:

> Haig: Were you there, Mr. Studds, in Vietnam?
> Studds: No. I was here trying to get us out of there.
> Haig: Where were you at the time, just for my personal interest.
> Studds: Where was I when?
> Haig: During the Vietnam conflict?
> Studds: Which part of it?
> Haig: Start to finish.

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[31] LeoGrande, 590.

Studds: That, unfortunately, is how I got myself in my current mess. I ran for this institution because I thought it was a tragic mistake.[32]

The Vietnam War made it possible for many mainstream Americans and politicians to question the dominant institutions and premises of American society and to consider alternatives. The war had discredited the American political establishment, and by raising doubts about the "best and brightest" in government helped legitimate grass roots progressive activism. Movements on the left reverberated within segments of liberalism during the 1970s and 1980s. The movements against nuclear power, nuclear weapons and U.S. intervention in Central America all percolated up, in Randall Forsberg's phrase, to influence mainstream politics.

The Vietnam War had also accentuated the apocalyptic qualities of the cold war. During the post-Vietnam era, nuclear power, nuclear weapons and U.S. involvement in Central America all held the threat of some type of apocalypse that fueled the search for an alternative world order based on a global humanity that transcended the cold war dualities of modern capitalism and Soviet-style authoritarian socialism. Activists sought to create a new world free of the shadow of potential self-destruction. Many on the left continued to pursue the ideals of participatory democracy, international self-determination, world peace, racial and gender equality and the liberation of humankind from economic exploitation. In 1968, many believed such a new world was on the verge of sweeping over the globe. In the 1970s and 1980s, activists sought to move toward that new world from the bottom up in what Barbara Epstein calls "pre-figurative politics".

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[32] "East-West Relations – U.S. Security Assistance." Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Ninety-Seventh Congress, Second Session, March 2, 1982, pg. 18.

Activists summed up the post-Vietnam era with the phrase, "Think Globally, Act Locally."

Although the Vietnam War helped pave the road into mainstream politics for those on the activist left, each movement in this study had its own relationship to the war and the movement against it. The antinuclear energy movement, in many ways, sought to return to the community politics of SNCC during the early 1960s, which had been derailed by the campus-based sectarian politics of the revolutionary New Left during the late 1960s. Antinuclear energy activists shaped an interpersonal movement heavily influenced by feminism and the counterculture.

The freeze movement sought to return to the early 1960s disarmament movement, which was eclipsed by Vietnam for over a decade. The freeze campaign, however, in many ways mirrored the tactics of those who sought to take the anti-Vietnam War movement into the mainstream during the late 1960s. The freeze movement continued the community and feminist politics of the antinuclear energy movement but distanced itself from the previous movement's countercultural influence. For activists like Sam Lovejoy, the freeze movement, symbolized by the clean cut Randy Kehler, lost some of the subversive fun of 1960s and 1970s activism. Lovejoy recalled, "Let me put it to you this way, no one ever offered me a joint after a SANE meeting."[33]

The Central American solidarity movement continued the community politics of the other post-Vietnam movements, but opened space for more militant activism and a return to the Third World revolution focus of the late 1960s New Left. But still, even with the wave of direct action during the 1985 anti-embargo protests, the solidarity movement avoided the pitched streets battles of the late 1960s. The movement pursued a

[33] Interview with Sam Lovejoy, May 24, 2003.

range of other tactics, from letter writing and lobbying, harvesting coffee in Nicaragua to civil disobedience. For the solidarity movement, "No more Vietnams!" was the guiding motif.

The 1960s not only opened up space for movements on the left, but those on the right. The 1970s and 1980s witnessed a bifurcation of American politics. The New Right, exploiting the social and cultural alienation of many Americans toward the movements of the 1960s, the economic dislocations of the 1970s, and anger over the decline of American global power, gained a slow ascendancy that resulted in a major political re-alignment in 1980. This placed activist movements and liberal politicians in oppositional roles. Although liberals and activists on the left could not stop the rightward shift of the nation, they blunted the trajectory of nuclear energy expansion, helped move a reluctant conservative president back towards arms control negotiations and prevented more direct U.S. military action in Central America.

When President George Bush pronounced the death of the Vietnam syndrome, he hoped his victory in Iraq would end not only national self-doubt that inhibited the full assertion of U.S. military power abroad, but the alternative vision for America and the world embodied by the left-liberal movements of the 1960s and after. It was these movements, and the alternative path they represented, that most inhibited the right from fully realizing its own vision of a New World Order, one in which "free markets" and "capitalist democracies" spread across the globe under the aegis of U.S. power.

The end of the cold war had a profound affect on the American left. Although few activists on the left were anxious to follow the Soviet model, many hoped revolutions such as the one in Nicaragua might provide a new model of revolution

leading toward social justice. The failure of revolutionary movements in the developing world left many activists disillusioned. The end of the cold war removed the frame of reference for many activists, who after a decade of seeming disorientation in the 1990s, slowly regrouped around the anti-[corporate] globalization movement of the late 1990s. Although much of the new "anti-globalization" movement pursued non-violent tactics rooted in the 1970s and 1980s, the anti-World Trade Organization protests in Seattle and anti-International Monetary Fund and World Banks protests elsewhere witnessed a return of the street fighting militancy of the late 1960s. The anti-globalization movement was sidelined by the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Centers accelerated the neo-conservative unilateralist policies of the George W. Bush administration. But in 2003, in response to the impending war in Iraq and the new doctrine of "preventive war", the world witnessed an unprecedented wave of peace demonstrations around the world. Not since the mass peace marches against the Euromissiles in the early 1980s has Europe experienced such large scale protest, nor since the freeze movement have so many Americans from all walks of life participated in a peace movement on such a large scale. The communications revolution of the 1990s has put in place the tools for activists to coordinate global protests on a scale unimaginable during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. As global power continues to drift to the right, activism on the left seems in the process of redefining itself once again and shows all likelihood of playing an important role on the world stage.

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